VOL. XXII, No. 1 JULY, 1924 No. 85

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $1.00 per annum; single copies 25 cents
Published by The Theosophical Society
at 64 Washington Mews, New York, N. Y.
July; October; January; April
Address all communications to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York

In Europe, single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2, England; or to Mr. E. H. Lincoln, 4 Sunningdale Avenue, Walker, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, from whom all back numbers may be obtained. Annual subscription price, 6s., postpaid.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XXII, NO. 1

July, 1924

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	1
PLOTINUS	9
STICKING POINTS	19
THEOSOPHY	23
THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS—ST. FRANCIS XAVIER II	32
THE CREST JEWEL OF WISDOM VI	40
A STUDY OF CONVERSION	45
ON THE SCREEN OF TIME	51
LETTERS TO STUDENTS	59
T. S. ACTIVITIES—REPORT OF CONVENTION	66
REVIEWS	92
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	95

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered as second-class matter September 5, 1923, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY, 1924

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Bread Cast upon the Waters

"CAST thy bread upon the waters," says the Ecclesiast, "for thou shalt find it after many days." Beginning some fifty years ago, The Theosophical Society cast the bread of life upon the waters with open hands; as the wheel of the half-century returns, the word of the Preacher is being fulfilled; the thoughts concerning life and spiritual powers, so generously dispensed, are coming back to us, from the minds of many men. So true is this, that it would not be difficult to fill a series of our pages with clippings from the daily papers, which would hardly be distinguishable from pages of the *Secret Doctrine*. Let us illustrate,—not with the thought that these gleanings represent accurate scientific knowledge, nor even that they are necessarily complete or correct reports, but rather to show what the public of our day wants to believe and is inclined to believe.

Not many days before these "Notes and Comments" were written, a telegram from Philadelphia, distributed among our newspapers, announced the discovery, by Dr. Howard Chiera, the Assyriologist, of a tablet recording the reigns of eight antediluvian kings, evidently comparable with the Patriarchs of Genesis, but covering far longer periods. One newspaper drew attention to the fact that, according to one reckoning, the total period was 432,000 years. This piece of news, so eagerly spread by telegraph, can be found in the *Secret Doctrine*, which was published in 1888 and 1889: "Could Chapter V of the First Book of Moses be compared with the genealogies in our Archaic Bible, the period from Adam unto Noah would be found noticed therein, though of course under different names, the respective years of the Patriarchs being turned into periods, and the whole being symbolical and allegorical." The period of 432,000 years is alluded to again and again; it is the key to the Four Yugas of the *Puranas* of India. The connection between the Indian and the Babylonian wisdom is also made clear in the *Secret Doctrine*.

Again, we find a lucid exposition of the Avatar doctrine, this time from

Kansas City: "In Hindu mythology Vishnu is the second god of the 'trimurti,' or trinity, in which he figures as the preserver of the universe. His friendship for man was manifested in his avatars, or incarnations, which according to some authorities number ten, and according to others twenty-two. Of these avatars, the two principal ones were the seventh, as Rama, the hero of the Ramayana, and the eighth as Krishna, the hero of the Mahabharata." This piece of "news" also was reprinted in the New York papers.

These same papers some time ago quoted Mr. Algernon Blackwood as writing in one of the London papers concerning magic: "Its manifestations must occur according to clear-cut laws, and magic, therefore, must be due to the operation of laws not only unknown to most of us, but unknown even to science. These laws the magician, thanks to unusual study of himself in relation to nature, has presumably discovered. If science remains ignorant of them, this is due, claim the believers, to several facts. First, that science declines to study them, on the plea that no evidence worth study yet exists; second, that in the few instances where it has tried to study them, its method has been wrong; third, that only to a state of consciousness higher and more extended than our normal one can such knowledge be possible at all, and that the whole inquiry, therefore, lies outside the scope of science."

Among hundreds of passages in the *Secret Doctrine* that might be adduced in comment, we need quote only one, taken almost at random: "The 'invention of magic'! A strange term to use, as though the unveiling of the eternal and actual mysteries of Nature could be *invented!*" But Madame Blavatsky would never agree that the exploration of a state of consciousness higher and more extended than our normal one, lies outside the scope of science. Theosophy, divine science, is precisely the exploration, in the most exact way possible, of those states of consciousness which are higher and more extended than our normal one.

ODIC RAYS

Nor is it true to-day that the foremost men of science decline to study extranormal phenomena. Here is one proof among many, once more taken from our daily newspapers, this time in a cablegram from Paris:

An Italian named Erto is said to have "produced luminous emanations twenty-five feet in length from his body while in a hypnotic trance and thereby confounded fifteen eminent savants, headed by Dr. Geley, president of the International Institute of Metaphysical Research, and Professor Charles Richet, to whom nothing in the metaphysical world is unworthy of research. Here is a man, according to these fifteen reputable investigators, who can emit electrical rays under what is believed to be not only absolutely fraud-proof conditions, but which defy all reproduction even with an apparatus of high voltage. It has been tested again and again. Professor Richet himself took out a photographic plate from a new packet, put it in a printing frame and sealed it with wax. After the séance the seals were intact. After they were broken by

Professor Richet and Dr. Geley the plates were immediately developed into prints, which revealed two large splashes of light similar to those obtained by X-rays or radium. The form of a hand was then distinguished. Analyzed later at the Prefecture of Police it proved to be the facsimile neither of Erto's hand nor of any of his assistants."

We conjecture that the word "assistants" is a faulty translation from the French, and that the sentence should read, "nor of any of those present," namely, the fifteen eminent scientists. Similar linguistic limitations mark the passages which follow in the cablegram, a part of which we may quote:

"Dr. Geley has obtained fifteen photographic impressions in this manner and has prepared an article on the subject for publication. Some of it is as follows:

"'I ascertained during the medium's state of trance that there were emanated from the human body, as would emanate from a physical or chemical body, radiations, the nature of which is unknown.

"'These radiations, by their physical properties, easily may be allied to such radiations already described and classified. When they have been minutely studied they will, no doubt, take place along with the others and not far from the X-rays or radio-actives.

"'But the human radiations are neither purely nor exclusively physical. They denote plastic properties, an organizing capacity which we have not yet noticed, unless in the complex and mysterious phenomenology of the ectoplasm, and will perhaps help us to understand more easily the latter, allying it more closely to the normal biological processes.'"

For those who are acquainted with the *Secret Doctrine*, parallel passages are hardly necessary. But we may cite a sentence which that work quotes from the still earlier *Isis Unveiled*, written about 1876:

"The Nerve-Aura and the Fluid of the Magnetists; the Od of Reichenbach; the Psychod and Ectenic Force of Thury; the Psychic Force of Sergeant Cox, and the atmospheric magnetism of some Naturalists; galvanism; and finally, electricity—all these are but various names for many different manifestations or effects of the same mysterious, all-pervading Cause, the Greek Archæus." In the passage which immediately precedes this quotation, there is an allusion to "the invisible, but only too tangible, fluid that radiates from the fingers of the healthy magnetizer," which brings us back to the hand-prints on Dr. Geley's photographic plates. Perhaps, if the fifteen eminent scientists were to study the two books from which we have just quoted, they might no longer be "confounded" by facts which have been known for ages.

Choosing almost at random from many garnered clippings, we come next to this cablegram, from Italy: "Signor Caselli's telluric prophecies for last March, which were deposited with a notary here (in Spezia) some time in advance of the expected disturbances, were completely and accurately confirmed by subsequent events. His studies of the recent earthquake at Abruzzi convinced him that telluric phenomena in their electro-magnetic manifestations unmistakably influence animals before the seismic movement begins.

Professor Caselli is inclined to believe the theory, which he says was known to the ancients, that great seismic movements may be produced by electromagnetic forces developed by the stars of our planetary system during the periods of their greatest proximity to the earth."

Once more, the *Secret Doctrine:* "As we are assured by Archaic Scientists that all such geological cataclysms—from the upheaval of oceans, deluges, and shifting of continents, down to the present year's cyclones, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions . . . are due to, and depend on the Moon and Planets. . . ."

THE ONE LIFE

Turning to another contribution to our daily papers, this time coming from Dr. J. C. Bose, "a British-Indian scientist," as quoted by Dr. Arthur Selwyn Brown, we may remember that the unity of all life is one of the most insistent teachings in the *Secret Doctrine*, and in the whole cycle of Theosophical writings. Long ago, *Isis Unveiled* quoted the Kabalistic dictum: "The stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a man, the man a god." Dr. Bose brings forward striking experimental evidence that this is literally true.

Beginning with the plants, we are told that "poets and romance writers have long delighted in personifying flowers, trees and plants. Scientists are now demonstrating that what was imagined by the poets is really true. Flowers and plants have personalities and nervous organizations. The rose, lotus and lily are proud flowers, and are quite conscious of their long lineage and the perfection of their evolution. There is also reason for believing that they are able to gauge æsthetic values.

"Dr. Bose employed his instruments upon metals with similar remarkable results. The changes in crystalline arrangements brought about by temperature changes, by shocks and by the influences of foreign substances were demonstrated. He is able so to control the crystals in iron, copper, lead and other metals and alloys that he can compel them to assume a state of fatigue or idleness, corresponding to the idleness in men and animals, or he can cause a bar of steel to become so exhilarated that it will dance about and stagger like a man under the influence of alcohol.

"Much research into the causes of crystallization in metals and the changes caused by work, heat, light and moisture upon metals has been carried on in the last few years with remarkable results. It is now clearly seen that crystals have definite characters and personalities, and suffer or flourish in accordance with their living conditions. They have well-defined lives and in many respects their social habits and characteristics closely resemble those of plants and animals."

In closing his valuable and suggestive article, Dr. Brown rises to a passage of real eloquence, which we are glad to transfer to our pages:

"Symmetry in nature was observed by the Egyptians and Greeks. Plotinus based his system of æsthetics upon it. . . . Decorative art in Babylon

and Egypt was based upon symmetry. . . . Beauty is universal. Throughout nature we find an instinctive tendency toward order, regularity and symmetry. The minutest investigations of the microscope reveal little but beauty in sections of wood, stone, gems or metals. Order and beauty are the rule in life, and disorder and degeneration are exceptions. Symmetry and beauty lead to the elevation of things and the advancement of the world. The same æsthetic laws which cause beauty to be exhibited by ice crystals, the net-patterns in metals and their alloys, in the spiral growth of plants and flowers and in the dispersal of crystals in rocks, operate universally in the promotion of beauty in everything, in the light of the stars, sun and moon, in land and sea scapes, and in the song of a bird or a violin solo. Symmetry and symmetrical form are the basis of character in men and conduct. Plotinus and other classical philosophical writers were correct in basing ethical systems upon symmetry and sympathy because, as the latest investigations into the crystalline arrangements of solids show, all matter tends to arrange itself into geometrical forms in even groups of colonies attracted together by sympathy, and ever striving to assume crystalline forms. Herein we see how nature has planned to make beauty and a striving toward perfection a universal goal."

THE THEOSOPHICAL METHOD

Students of Theosophy have in all ages been branded as heretics. We do not forget the arraignment of Paul, the Theosophist, by Tertullus as "a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," the more drastic reading of the Greek being: "the heresy of the Nazarenes." Therefore, students of Theosophy have a certain instinctive sympathy with those who are charged with "heresy," until the "heretics" become as dogmatic as the "orthodox," or, as often happens, even more dogmatic. Yielding to the self-centred tendency unhappily inherent in our present humanity, when they perceive a half-truth, or even a fragment of truth, they are inclined, simply because they themselves have recognized it, at once to proclaim it as complete, to give to it the august name of Truth.

Quoting once more from a daily paper, this time in a dispatch from Cleveland, Ohio, we learn that "Bishop William Montgomery Brown, retired, former head of the diocese of Arkansas" was on trial there before a Court of Bishops on heresy charges.

We are even more interested in some of the clauses in the charges made against him, based on passages in his book, *Communism and Christianism*, because some of these passages are statements of half-truths; the writer has caught a glimpse of truth from a single angle. Unfortunately, his tendency is to leap to the conclusion that his truth is not a fragment, but the whole, and he undertakes in a somewhat assertive spirit to declare that all other sides of the same truth are false. Take, for example, such sentences as these: "The world's Saviour—God—is knowledge. There is no other Christ on earth or in any heaven above it. . . . Omar, poetic astronomer, might have added a quatrain which would have closed, 'I myself am God.' This is, in effect, what

Jesus did say: 'I and my father are one.' This is as true of you and me, and of every man, woman and child, as it was of Jesus."

If in the first sentence the writer means divine knowledge, the Logos, then he is in agreement with students of Theosophy throughout the ages; he is in agreement with Paul, who spoke of Christ as "the wisdom of God." If in the second passage, he means that the divinity which was fully realized in the Master Christ, is potentially present, though not yet realized or even recognized, in every man, woman and child, then, once again, students of Theosophy would agree with him.

But when he goes on to say: "Gods in the skies (Jesus, Jehovah, Allah, Buddha) are all right as subjective symbols of human potentialities . . . but such Gods are all wrong if regarded as objective realities existing independently of those who created them as divinities and placed them in celestial habitations," he is asserting a great deal more than he really knows; he is adrift upon the sea of fragmentary truths. Jehovah and Allah are, perhaps, personifications and to a certain degree distortions of the real, and therefore, in a sense, objective Logos. As for the two great Masters whose names he intercalates with these personifications, many students of Theosophy hold that they have a better claim to objective reality than the good prelate who was tried at Cleveland; they belong to a far more permanent category of being.

Again, when he writes: "My god, nature, is a triune divinity—matter being the father, force the son, and law the spirit," he comes close to a tenet of the *Secret Doctrine*. But when he adds: "I ceased to believe in the existence of a conscious, personal divinity. Of course, my faith in the existence of a spiritual world and hope for a future life in it went with God," we can only regret profoundly that he had not the opportunity to study at least the elements of the divine science, or that, having it, he did not recognize it and use it. We have expressed the view that the Logos is entirely real, and objective in the sense that it is no figment of subjective imagination; but to call the Logos "personal," and in that sense a "personal God," is unphilosophical, because it belongs to an order of being far transcending personality. This has always been the view of students of Theosophy; yet students of Theosophy have been as unanimous in their "faith in the existence of a spiritual world and hope of a future life." To put it quite simply, the Bishop's conclusions do not in the least follow from his premises, nor do his premises appear to be fully understood.

We are ready to believe that Bishop Brown did not reach his rather Nihilistic conclusions without much real mental and moral suffering, and it is likely that the present broadcasting of these views may cause much pain to others. We are convinced that Truth could be as well served, nay, infinitely better served, and all this suffering rendered unnecessary, by the reasonable use of the Theosophical method: "Gently to hear, kindly to judge"; the motto which stands at the beginning of the *Secret Doctrine*.

These little minds of ours have space in them only for little truths, for tiny fragments of the great Truth. Why, then, when benign law reveals to us a

little truth, must we, in our egotism and conceit, seize on it and proclaim it to be all Truth and denounce our brother's fragment of truth as a delusion? Urbanity, tolerance, gentleness of heart and mind, are fair and graceful virtues, but they are something more: they are the indispensable condition for perceiving any truth; indispensable, if we would supplement our fragments by the fragments perceived by others. The spirit of the dogmatic and self-assertive "heretic," like the spirit of the dogmatic heresy-hunter, is the most effectual barrier to truth that the human mind, in its almost infinite perversity, can create.

MODERN SCIENCE GROWS MORE LIBERAL

It is a pleasure to turn from the jarring discords of theological controversy to an article, recently printed in the New York *Sun*, whose title we have taken to head this paragraph. The article begins:

"Step by step, without beating of drums, science has come to embrace several ideas it repelled with contumely when Mme. Blavatsky sprang them on our daddies in the fruitful 'seventies.' These were the days when a visit to the high priestess of esoteric Buddhism was one of the intellectual treats of New York.

"Also they were the days when science banked on the cave man as a primitive type of human forefather, not much less brutish than the man with a tail or the 'missing link' that the Darwinians searched for so anxiously.

"Naught but ridicule did the official paleontologists and other 'ologists' pour upon the Russian seeress's assertions—credited by her to the holy and powerful Mahatmas who were supposed to guide her from the fastnesses of the Himalayas—that our remotest ancestors were not ape men, but highly civilized men of a veritable golden age.

"Her dialectical attacks upon Sir E. Ray Lankaster, in which she claimed a vastly greater age for the human race than science had hitherto allowed it, and baffled retort by claiming a civilized origin for the colossal statues of Easter Island and for certain other relics that mystify the savants, were among the high spots of the decade.

"And now Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn, head of the American Museum of Natural History, tells us that the cave man was anything but a roughneck, that he compared favorably with us moderns in brain capacity and in moral and spiritual culture. Also Dr. Osborn embraces Bergson's conception of 'creative evolution,' which corresponds perfectly with the metaphysics of Buddhism and other Oriental philosophies expounded by Blavatsky.

"Moreover, we recently had a renowned British scientist presenting the Royal Society with a mass of evidence he had collected in support of the idea that the whole habitable earth was dominated by a lofty civilization that was the parent of all the extinct civilizations of which we have historical or archæological knowledge—a theory supporting the golden age doctrine of Blavatsky and the legend of Atlantis, as repeated by Plato and earlier chroniclers.

"Some echoes of the stir of discipleship and opposition that 'H. P. B.' aroused in New York occur in Charles R. Flint's recently published *Memories of an Active Life*. . . .

"Scientists were more hardboiled in those days than they are to-day. The other day we learned that the Harvard psychological department was carrying on hopeful experiments in thought transmission across the Atlantic. And we didn't turn a hair.

"And now we have Dr. A. J. Rivière of Paris announcing the decidedly Blavatskian doctrine that the human body contains vital forces deriving their strength from the cosmic force, and that one person can attract or annihilate a thought in the brain of another person. And in several other directions science has taken a course that would almost make the professors of Blavatsky's day turn in their graves."

The passages referring to Madame Blavatsky in Mr. Flint's book are in part as follows. There is first the story of a lawsuit regarding certain lands on Long Island:

"After the court had taken the matter under advisement, Madame left the city, but wrote several letters to Ivins asking him as to the progress of the suit, and finally astonished him by a letter giving an outline of an opinion which she said the court would render in the course of a few days, in connection with a decision in her favour. In accordance with her prediction, the court handed down a decision sustaining her claim upon grounds similar to those which she had outlined in her letter." Mr. Flint further puts Mr. Ivins on record as stating "that Madame had surprised him by her remarkable intellectual powers and apparent second sight; that she was engaged at the time of the suit in translating such works as Buckle's *History of Civilization* and Darwin's *Origin of Species*, into Russian; and that she asserted that she could tell the contents of a book without reading it, and could specify material which appeared on any given page."

These events took place before the founding of The Theosophical Society, in November, 1875, and are, therefore, germane to our consideration of the period of fifty years which has since elapsed.

The words of the Preacher are justified. The bread cast upon the waters begins to return. The spiritual knowledge and inspiration poured out so generously into the thought aura of the world half a century ago, is breaking through, working outward through many minds.

So far, the story. Now the moral: What will come through, half a century hence, depends on what we do now.

PLOTINUS

Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?
That, whence all this great creation came,
Whether its will created or was mute,
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.

RIG VEDA.

IT has been suggested that the School of Ammonius Saccas in Alexandria was an expression of the Theosophical Movement. Fortunately, we possess internal evidence supporting this supposition. Ammonius himself committed nothing to writing, but his disciple, Plotinus, embodied part, at least, of his exoteric doctrine in the *Enneads*.[1] Plotinus seems to have over-emphasized the abstract and intellectual side of it, at the expense of the practical and ethical; but there is no reason to doubt Porphyry's explanation, that Plotinus made a real effort to transmit the thought of the Alexandrian sage.

Of Plotinus, the man, we know only what Porphyry, his disciple, has recorded in a short biography. He was born at Lycopolis in Egypt (A.D. 205), and died about sixty-five years later near Rome. At the age of twenty, he began the study of philosophy and attended the lectures of many famous professors in Alexandria, but always came away, saddened and discouraged, until a friend suggested the name of Ammonius Saccas. After listening to Ammonius, Plotinus is said to have exclaimed: "This is the man I have been seeking." He passed eleven years in the School of Ammonius, but in 244, being eager to know at first hand the wisdom of Persia and India, he joined the army of the Emperor Gordian in the East. After the death of Gordian in Mesopotamia, Plotinus escaped with difficulty to Antioch, and a year later founded a school of philosophy in Rome. Here, he gathered together a small group of students, to whom he entrusted much of the teaching which he had received from Ammonius. His life was quiet, ascetic, and devoid of external adventure, although he was forced, like M. Bergson in our own day, to submit to a great deal of fashionable popularity. He made, indeed, one effort to apply his ideas to social life. The Emperor Gallienus greatly honoured him, and Plotinus tried to obtain his patronage for a colony of philosophers, to be established on the site of an old Greek city in southern Italy, and to be governed in accordance with Plato's *Laws*. Opposition at court put an end to the plan, and may have preserved the philosopher from a fiasco. In general, Plotinus seems to have given little thought to the grave social and political dangers, which

[1] The manuscripts of Plotinus were edited by Porphyry, who arranged them somewhat arbitrarily in six volumes, each with nine tractates or chapters. The term, *Ennead*, is derived from the Greek word for nine.

threatened the Empire of which he was a citizen. He regarded all practical problems a little contemptuously, as being beneath the dignity of a philosopher seeking union with the Eternal. Here, in fact, we touch his weakest point, where he was in contact with the lassitude and fatalism of the cultivated classes of his time, who had long since abandoned the government of Rome to plebeians and barbarians. We shall refer later to his misconception of action,—a misconception rather latent than expressed. He was a great contemplative metaphysician, but he was not a sage. He did not always draw the practical conclusions, which might have been naturally deduced from his view of man's relation to the Universe.

"Plotinus was good and kindly, gentle and amiable. . . . Ever one-pointed in his thought, pure of soul, turning towards the Divine which he loved with all his being, he strove to rise above the bitter waves of this life. . . Four times, while I knew him, he attained to union with the Most High, not in fancy, but in a real and ineffable experience." (Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*, 23.)

Although the terminology and the form of his thought are Platonic, Plotinus was not an imitator of Plato. It is even possible that much of the difficulty in understanding Plotinus may be due to the fact that he uses Plato's terms without Plato's meanings.

Both Plato and Plotinus assert that the psycho-physical world is only a shadow of reality, and that it is the duty and privilege of man to separate himself from the shadow and to reunite himself with the reality, which in truth he is. But Plato tends to identify reality with a concrete state of moral beauty. His remedy for the evils of existence is distinctly objective,—to attach the imagination to those forms and ideals which most clearly manifest goodness, truth and beauty. Of course, he never advocates a permanent attachment to any one form, since above every form there must always be other forms revealing the Divine more perfectly. The point is, that Plato does not emphasize the immanence of God, but rather His transcendence, so that He is primarily to be sought in a state of existence above and outside the individual consciousness. Therefore, he devises a method of approach to God, by attachment to a succession of external forms. It is a method marvellously adapted to the Western mind and to an active, objective life of the Western kind. It is significant that the Church has often used it in one or another form.

In comparison with Plato, Plotinus has an Eastern mind and brings an Eastern solution to the problem of what constitutes reality. He is abstract and introspective, and seeks the God immanent in all consciousness. There is in Plotinus a certain impatience with all formal and external existence, as if this were a barrier between the soul and God. Thus, he "retreats within," following the traditional way of the East, meditating on the Being of the One Self, which is formless, as it is deathless and infinite. The affinities of his thought are often to be found in India rather than in Greece. It appears certain that Indian philosophy was studied and applied in the School of Ammonius Saccas.

But, in spite of the Oriental cast of his mind, Plotinus uses, as the instrument

of his thought, the language of Plato, a most typical Occidental thinker. We may surmise that one purpose of Neoplatoni m was to bring together East and West, to base action on Self-knowledge and to manifest Self-knowledge in action.

Consciously or unconsciously, the system of Plotinus unites many Eastern and Western elements. It is incomplete, especially on the Western side, because he underestimates the significance of human action on all planes below the intellectual. That does not mean that it must be regarded as a record of complete failure. The *Enneads* may well be considered the most thorough and consistent metaphysical work of classical antiquity. It represents, however imperfectly, the superb effort of a human spirit to ris superior to the forces of darkness and decadence, at a time when the action of those forces was more than usually manifest in the break-up of a great civilization.

The Neoplatonic philosophy has been called the "emanation doctrine," because it conceives the Universe as a graduated emanation of divine life. Each state of consciousness is emanated by a higher state, which is in turn emanated by another still higher, until the one consciousness of the undivided Self, the ultimate source of all emanations, is reached. The order of beings is thus hierarchical, each individual entity acting as a mediator, receiving consciousness from above and passing on to lower entities as much of this consciousness as they can receive and contain. "In the Universe, life resembles a great chain, in which each being is a link. All things generate that which is inferior to them and are generated by that which is superior. They remain distinct but not separate from the higher being, and pass into a lower stage of being, but without being in any way absorbed." (5.2.2.)[2]

The emanation doctrine affirms the unity of the world and the law of correspondences. All things are contained within the consciousness of the Divine, the One Self. The only reality which things possess is this immanence of the Divine, which they share according to their degrees of receptivity. "The Universe tends to integrate itself in every atom." Therefore, there is continuity and correspondence between all parts of the world. What is true of the whole is, in a profound sense, true of every part.

The Divine is the creator and the goal, the substance and the life, the veritable Self of all beings. It is the First Principle (*to proton*) underlying manifestation, and it is the Unity, the One Substance, the One Self (*to hon*), in which all appearances of multiplicity or separateness are dissolved. Nothing can exist apart from it, and yet it is itself no thing. It is, indeed, called the First, but there is no second.

The human mind cannot imagine absolute unity. Therefore, it represents the One Self as a triad, which is a unity having two aspects. Thus, Plotinus

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[2] The quotations given are from the *Enneads*, the only authentic surviving work of Plotinus. I have made use of the translations of Stephen Mackenna and W. D. Guthrie. It has been necessary to paraphrase many passages, but there has been no alteration of the meaning. Dean Inge's book, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, may be recommended to all who are interested in Neoplatonism, especially as regards its relations with Christian theology and mysticism.

develops a conception somewhat like that of the Three Logoi of the *Secret Doctrine*. He does not try to describe the One in terms of Itself, but only as it is revealed through its aspects of individual and personal consciousness. When he refers directly to the One Self—as distinguished from its aspects—he uses negative terms. It is not this or not that. He speaks positively only in reference to its supreme creative power, which is also one with the supreme mystery of Being. We may correlate this First Principle or Supreme Power, at the apex of the Neoplatonic triangle, with the First Logos and with Atma, the Higher Self in man.

"The One Self is wholly independent of chance and fate. It is the cause of itself and proceeds from itself by its own power, for it is itself its own principle and is above all manifestation." (6.8.4.) "Because the Self is everywhere in its entirety, it is not contained within omnipresence, but is omnipresence itself, and it imparts being to the nature which it contains. Being the Supreme, it holds all things in dependence. It moves within itself, loving itself, since it is itself both lover and beloved. . . It is the nature of the One to be that which it is. It has had no beginning, but is eternal, and its nature may be called wakefulness. It is above existence, above wisdom and above the life of reason, for these derive their being from the Self, whereas the Self is what it is, because it wills itself so to be.' (6.8.16.)

The First Principle is consciousness itself: therefore we may attribute to it a certain awareness of itself (*diakritiken heautou*), but, if it had remained eternally within itself, it would never have attained consciousness of itself in any individual or personal sense, for there is no distinction between being and nature, between subject and object, in the One Self. "Since the One is everywhere, it is not divided. Otherwise it would have parts, one here and another there. The unity of the Self would be annihilated by such a division; it would become a body. We must admit that the One Self is present as a whole at every point simultaneously." (6.5.4.) "If we imagine a multitude of rays proceeding from a single source, we shall understand how the appearance of multiplicity is born. In a physical circle, the rays are distinct, because the circle is a plane. But, when there is no actual radiation, but only the potentiality of radiation, all the rays must be conceived as centres, which are united together in a single centre. There will seem to be as many centres as there are rays, which come to shine in the one centre, and yet all these centres will in reality form only one centre." (6.5.5.)

The Divine Self is called the One, because outside itself nothing is, and because within itself there is no division or separateness of parts. It is called the Father and the Good (*to agathon*), because it does not remain inactive but uses its most beneficent power to create the Universe in its image. It is at once the efficient and the final cause of the world, the "beginning and the ending" of the manifested. Everything aspires towards and depends upon the Good, which is the measure and end of all creatures. (1.8.2.)

There is the great mystery, that the Self is; and there is the mystery, quite as fathomless, that the Being of the Self is beneficent. To be is to be bene-

ficent, and to be beneficent is to create. For creation is the radiation of consciousness and all consciousness is radiant, imparting itself to all creatures from the highest to the lowest. It is not by accident that Plotinus has called the First Logos the Supreme Good. It is supremely good, because it gives all that it is, and, just because it gives all, it loses nothing, but remains always the master of the powers which radiate from its Being. It is nourished by its own sacrifice.

"If the Self be the first power, it must surely be supreme, and all else must imitate it. That which attains perfection, cannot unfruitfully remain within itself. It must generate and produce. Not only beings capable of choice, but even those which lack reflection, have a tendency to impart what is in them to others; thus, fire emits heat and plant juices dye whatever they touch. All creatures in nature strive to imitate the First Principle, when they seek to gain a certain immortality by reproducing their species. How, then, can the Self which is the Supreme Good, remain self-absorbed, as if a sentiment of jealousy rendered it powerless to create." (5.4.1.) The Self is all things and yet is no thing. The principle of all things cannot be all things, except in the sense that all things are contained within its unity. But it is just because no entity exists separately within it, that all entities can issue from it. As it is itself perfect and acquires nothing and has no need nor desire, it has—so to speak—overflowed (*hypererrue*, cf. the Latin *emanare*). This overflowing or emanation has produced the semblance of a "second nature." (5.2.1.)

The "second nature" is called—according to the aspect named—*nous*, *noesis* or *noeton*, these Greek words having the same root as the Greek, *gnosis*, the Sanskrit, *jnana*, and the English, *knowledge*. Madame Blavatsky suggested the Neoplatonic use of *nous*, when she contrasted noetic with psychic action (Cf. *Lucifer*, Oct. 15, 1890). In this article she identifies noetic action with *sophia*, or the blended wisdom of heart, mind and act.

Wisdom may be described as being, in one aspect, the highest attainable state of an individual consciousness. We cannot know how individual consciousness originated, nor what is the nature of that mysterious blending of individual and universal, which constitutes the great heart of things. We can only say that the unmanifested Self appears to be absolute unity, and that the manifested Self appears to be a host, although it is present as a whole in every individual or monad of that host. Every individual is the absolute unity, at the same time that it is eternally itself and is distinct from all other individuals.

The manifested Self is the Seer,[3] the enjoyer of wisdom, who distinguishes between himself and other individualities, even while perceiving his union with them. His consciousness is that of the One Self, for what other consciousness can there be? But, in comparison with the undivided consciousness of the One, that of the Seer is veiled and incomplete. However, because it is individual, it is the highest of which our minds can have even the faintest idea.

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[3] The term, Seer, is used to denote the supreme form of any ray of individual consciousness. But it must not be forgotten that Plotinus does not limit potential individuality to man. The words, Seer, Soul, and Nature are equally applicable to all grades of evolving consciousness, to microcosm and to macrocosm, to atom and to star.

In the One Self there is only a potential opposition of subject and object. But the noetic consciousness implies such an opposition in actual appearance. The subject is *nous*, the Seer, and the object is *to noeton*, the substance of the known, or wisdom. Joining subject and object, there is *noesis*, the vision and will of the Seer. In reality the three are one: "The *nous* knows by *noesis*, which is itself, the *noeton*, which is also itself." (5.9.5.) It seems like a distinction without a difference. How can there be a "pair of opposites," if the opposites are really one and the same thing? The unaided mind cannot answer and will only waste time by trying, unless it recognizes the truth conveyed by the intuition, that even in physical vision we are, indeed, one with what we see, for otherwise we could not see it nor recognize what we see. Because we are very little, we see very little. Wisdom is the ultimate expansion of the individual nature, so that the Seer, the perfected individual, embraces within his vision vast fields of cosmic existence unimaginable by us. In comparison with the human mind, the consciousness of the Seer appears infinite. But, because the Seer is still individual, he conceives other individuals as in some way external to himself. He is not the Self freed of all illusion, for he does not yet contain all things in himself.

Wisdom is incompatible with any gross illusion. The Seer is above time, as we conceive time. In all ages, mystics have testified to the unreality of that appearance of phenomena, which makes us regard them as succeeding one another in time. And, in our own day, mathematical theory has developed the idea that our consciousness of time is only a blurred and confused adumbration of a real and direct intuition of the fourth dimension of space. "As the existence of generated things consists in perpetually acquiring something or other, this existence is annihilated by the removal of its future. But the blessed Seer has no thought of the future, because he is already all that it is possible for him to be. He cannot receive in himself anything for which there might be a future, for his nature is complete and lacks nothing. For that which is truly existent, there is no time when it does not exist or when it changes the form of its existence." (Cf. *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 16.) We must not imagine intervals in real existence nor suppose that it develops or acquires anything or contains any succession of stages within itself. (3.7.3–5.)

The Seer is also above the limitations of our space. "In the real world no shadow limits vision. All beings perceive and interpenetrate one another. Every being contains within itself the whole of wisdom, and beholds it entire in every other being. All things are located everywhere. Everything is great, for the small also is great. In Heaven, the sun is also all the other stars, and again each star is the sun. One thing in each is prominent above the rest, but it also shows forth all. Each celestial being has its peculiar and proper essence, but it does not differ from the region in which it dwells, because wisdom is its region and it is itself wisdom." (5.8.4.)

Individuality is the necessary form for the manifestation of the One Self. There is One Being, but it is revealed by the infinite number of its aspects. Each aspect manifests the whole, but is not the whole. Each aspect partici-

pates in the others, but remains itself. "The things which participate in the universal unity are incapable of possessing a complete nature conformed to unity, but they enjoy the presence of some powers of the universal Being. If they do not have more, it is because they are not capable of receiving more from the presence of the universal. Evidently the Self is always present, where its powers are present. However, it remains apart, for, if it became the form of any particular being, it would cease to be universal." (6.4.3.) The individuals of the noetic host may be compared to the Monads (Buddhi manifesting Atma). They act as mediators between Self and personality between God and the world. They have been said to resemble the circle of blessed spirits round the throne of God in the *Paradiso* of Dante.

From the *nous* or Second Logos proceeds the Third, Soul or Life (*psuché*). "The Seer emanates an image of himself, just as the Seer is himself a radiation of the One Self. The manifestation of the Seer is the Soul. Though the Soul is born from above, its creation is not caused by any diminution of the Seer's nature, even as the Seer was brought into being by the power of the Self, without thereby altering or weakening the nature of the Self." (5.2.1.)

The Seer emanates the Soul by the power of its contemplation (*energeia theorias*), "the yearning to create many forms." (4.4.22.) The Seer, contemplating the reflection of the Good in his nature, is drawn upwards by devotion towards identity and union with that unmanifested Good, which is the One Self of all beings. But, as the undivided life and love of the Self "overflows," and thus brings the Seer to birth, so the love of the Seer for the Father "overflows" to the plane below and becomes incarnate there as personality or Soul. Throughout the Universe, "as above, so below," there is this dual current of ascending and descending motion, so that it is impossible for spirit to rise, without thereby imparting more life to matter. Perhaps such is one meaning of the dark saying of Heraclitus, that "the way up and the way down are one and the same." The mystery of creation is not to be distinguished from the mystery of redemption.

The Soul is the personal life of the Seer. The Soul is dependent upon the Seer for existence and power, but the Seer is also dependent upon the Soul, which gives personality and form to his individuality. Without Soul the Wisdom of the Seer would remain abstract and static. Unity does not exist alone and self-enclosed, for then all things would remain hidden in that Unity. All would be formless and no beings would achieve existence. Again, the individual Seer cannot exist, without giving birth to the inferior nature destined by its rank to be Soul. It is not even sufficient for the Soul to exist, unless it reveal what it can create. It is natural for each nature to produce something beneath itself and to draw this creation out of itself by a development similar to that of a seed. But even while creating, no principle ever departs from its own nature. There must be a continuous procession of beings, until all things have descended to the extreme limit of the material existence which is possible for them; for it is the nature of an inexhaustible power to communicate all of its gifts to every being and not to disinherit any. There

is nothing which prevents any being from participating in the Good, in the measure that it is capable of doing so. Since matter has eternally existed, it must also participate in the Eternal. The excellence, power and goodness of Wisdom are, in turn, revealed by sense-objects. There is an eternal connection between divine beings, which are self-existent, and sense-objects, which derive their existence from divine beings by participation in their essence and which imitate their power to the extent of their ability. (4.8.6.)

The forms reflected in the Soul's substance are vestures or images of the Seer and make his being explicit. Contemplating the reflection of Wisdom in its nature, the Soul is drawn upwards towards the reality above the reflection. The Seer responds to the aspiration of the Soul, by absorbing its nature into himself, so that he and the Soul become one. Through this union the Soul gains wisdom and power, and the Seer's individuality assumes the personal consciousness of the Soul, without ceasing to be universal. Indeed, he needs personality to become aware of his universality. He becomes Self-conscious, by perceiving the image of his being in the Soul, and he can only perceive that image, in proportion as the Soul imparts to him its own faculties and experience. There is a constant interchange of consciousness and force between the Logoi. One cannot be imagined without the others. They are co-eternal aspects of a Divine Unity, like a series of overtones. (Cf. 6.5.4.)

The life of the Soul may be best described in terms of its powers. The Soul is the creator or imaginer of the psycho-physical universe extended in space and time. The material world, when conceived apart from Soul, is absolute illusion, but we only conceive it thus, when deceived by its glamour. For, if we represent the Soul as the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of space and time, the material world appears as a great crucible, in which personality and Self-consciousness first take form.

The Soul creates by the power of its Nature (*phusis*), and it redeems itself and its creation by the power of its Reason or discursive thought (*dianoia*). It thus contains within itself two principles or degrees, which we may correlate with Higher and Lower Manas. Only it must be made clear that Nature, or the lower part of the Soul, is not in itself evil, but is the overflow of Reason, this overflow being an invariable accompaniment of the contemplation of the world of the Seer by the higher part of the Soul.

"The universal Soul does not remain at rest, but enters into activity and thus generates an image of itself. On the one hand, by contemplation of the principle from which it proceeds, the Soul attains union with that principle; on the other hand, by advancing—as it were—in an opposite direction, it generates an image, which may be defined as the principle of sensation and growth in things. Thus the Soul vitalizes even the vegetable kingdom, inasmuch as plants derive their power of growth from the Soul. But it is not the whole Soul which passes into a plant. The higher part of the Soul remains in contact with the plane of wisdom. We may say that there is a procession of beings from the First to the last, and that each being occupies its proper place in this procession. In every instance, that which is emanated is subordinate to that

which emanates, but the two are similar in essence, as long as they remain in contact." (5.2.1–2.)

Nature is the last or lowest reality in the spiritual Universe. It creates the material world according to the pattern of Reason. For Nature has a dreaming and elemental consciousness, and is rapt in the contemplation of the Reason which is both above and within Nature. But Nature only becomes aware of Reason, in so far as it is able to embody Reason in the ordered forms of the physical world, to which correspond the bodily senses. Nature is as indispensable to the Reason of the Soul as Reason itself is to the Seer. It provides Reason with a succession of vehicles or incarnations, without which personality could never acquire form and definiteness. "The manifested being an imitation or reflection of the unmanifested, it appears that the purpose of emanation is not generation and action, but is rather the production of objects, which may be contemplated (by the unmanifested)." (3.8.7.) Incidentally, is not this the true function of all art?

Below Nature, or, rather, outside Nature, is non-being or indeterminateness (*to apeiron*), which is often identified by Plotinus with matter (*hule*). Non-being is the condition of the "sense of separateness," of the illusion that our individual and personal lives are absolutely self-sufficient and isolated from one another. It is, in a sense, the negative aspect of material existence, as the positive aspect is the form or quality, which is an expression or emanation of Nature. We recognize non-being in the shadowy ephemerality of all phenomena, in the state of constant change in space and time, to which all material things are reduced; so that nothing material may be said really to exist, since everything eludes our touch as in a dream. The future becomes the past, before we can hold it even for an instant, as it passes phantom-like through the present. As an ancient philosopher said: "No man ever stepped twice into the same river."

But, as applied to the manifested world, both being and non-being are relative terms. In general, it may be said that every plane appears negative and indeterminate, in terms of the consciousness of the next higher plane. Soul or personality has the same relation to the enlightened consciousness of the Seer, that physical matter has to the form which it embodies. Spirit and matter are different stages of differentiation of the same substance, as is said in the *Secret Doctrine*.

Physical matter belongs to the plane where the power of creation or emanation comes to an end. Matter cannot transmit anything; it can only reflect back what it receives. It shines with a borrowed light, like the Moon, which has been, from time immemorial, a symbol of all material things.

Because it mirrors the forms of Nature, the material world is an image of Nature and of the great Hierarchies, which stand between Nature and the One Self. Man still needs the mirror of matter where the Real is reflected, for he cannot yet stand before the Real, face to face. Even in the grossest illusion of the senses, there is hidden a seed of Truth. Thus, even time is not wholly fluid and elusive. It contains rhythms, periodicities, cycles, recurring accord-

ing to immutable laws, from which neither the world as a whole nor any part thereof can be exempt. All forms here below pass away, but they return again and again, testifying that the Consciousness of which they are an expression, is immortal and does not change.

Matter is often called evil. But Plotinus often confuses his terms in his discussion of the problem of evil, because of the constant distinction which he makes between the relative and the absolute. He does not admit the existence of absolute or cosmic evil, as he makes very clear in a vigorous polemic against the Gnostics who professed belief in an evil world-soul. (2.9.) Evil comes into the world with self-conscious personality—on this planet, with man—and proceeds from a misuse of free-will. Self-will both creates and is established upon the "dire heresy of separateness," which is fostered by all psychic brooding upon the concerns of the body. All souls are one in the Oversoul, but when the individual soul identifies itself with the body, and perceives the world only with the eyes of the body, it no longer recognizes the interpenetration of all forms, and loses consciousness of the One Life.

The question must arise,—how did Plotinus apply the emanation doctrine to practical life? We must postpone the effort to answer that question, and meanwhile invite the patient reader—after making allowance for the defects of our presentation—to make an application of the emanation doctrine for himself.

S. L.

(*To be continued*)

It is commonly said that education ought to make men dissatisfied and teach them to desire to improve their position. It is a pestilent heresy. It ought to teach them to be satisfied with simple conditions, and to improve themselves rather than their position—the end of it ought to be content.—A. C. Benson.

STICKING POINTS

SOME time ago a paper was published in a medical journal entitled "Sticking Points in Development." Its argument was based on data observed in physical and mental fields, but if it has any substratum of reality it can just as well be applied spiritually, if not by the writer then by the reader; and with the hope that it can be so stretched, it is submitted in partial quotation to the QUARTERLY. This writer began by saying what we all know, that precisely as the body may be developed by exercise, so may it degenerate by inertia, and that this development or this degeneration is an actual physiological change occurring within the bodily cells. His illustrations are drawn from the experience of wrestlers, pugilists, oarsmen, and so on, who are kept under close observation during training, and especially from the millions of men in the late war whose cellular systems were deliberately raised from far below to far above normal, by systematic training.

Of the plant world also this is true: "When we first undertake to reproduce a plant by cuttings, we often find it difficult to make it grow that way, but if we take a cutting from the first plant raised from a cutting, we find the second will grow more easily than the first, and the third more easily still, and so on. . . . But when a plant is continually reproduced by cuttings, it is not being reproduced by seed and therefore is not exercising its seed-producing power. The result is that plants which are reproduced regularly by cuttings gradually lose their power of producing seeds, or seeds which will germinate." Here we have simultaneous gain and loss—gain in one direction by exercise, and loss in the other by disuse.

Now in all varieties of development by use, it has been the observation of our writer that we come to what he calls "sticking points." Whether we draw our illustrations from experiments with animalculæ in the laboratory, from the records of trotting horses, from the yield of milch cows, from the school work of children, or the college work of adolescents, we find these inexplicable temporary arrests, which may be turned into lasting stoppages by bungling efforts to force past them, or by inert acceptance of them as finalities. Although we may not understand sticking points, our obligation is to recognize them and presently to pass them. An illustration drawn from physics may serve here: "We do not know why, when we apply heat to ice at zero, each addition of heat will raise the temperature till we get to 32° and a sticking point. For a time, further addition of heat does not raise the temperature, but only results in changing the material from ice to water at the same temperature. When that change is completed, each addition of heat increases the temperature till we come to another sticking point at 212°. Here, for a long time, further addition of heat does not raise the temperature in the least. It results only in changing the water into steam which is of the same temperature as the water. This

point passed, further addition of heat increases the temperature until we find another sticking point at which steam is disassociated into hydrogen and oxygen." Here are facts which, if not understood, are daily and hourly acted upon. But perhaps enough has been said to suggest the trend of this writer's argument, and to prove his contention that such sticking points do occur often enough and in sufficiently varied guise in the lower kingdoms, to make search for them in higher kingdoms of interest and perhaps of value.

When we pass on to the mental and moral worlds, those who have the guidance of the young are well aware of snarls and sticking points. Some of these are racial, stereotyped, punctual, while others are daunting in their mysteriousness, because they are personal, idiosyncratic, and only to be dealt with as unclassified phenomena. As typical of the first, who does not recognize Johnnie, snaggle-toothed and debonair, who "simply loved" the dictionary a year ago, was a sort of interrogative gnat—avid of information and drunk with polysyllables, but who now finds "*aw gee*" sufficient for his simple conversational needs, and who has become so contentedly worthless that his mother is driven to a review of his paternal in-laws to account for him at all. Then look at Mary—the *best* little girl, *absolutely* no trouble—obedient! impeccable! pious! But the snarl period approaches; the smooth skein ceases to unwind; let no one ask for Mary now, for "it is impossible to do a thing with her"—Mary has become an evil changeling. But all is not lost, these are only sticking points. Johnnie will presently acquire the fifty words or so needed for the minimum of human interchange, and Mary will vary no more from type than does a paper doll.

Sometimes the change is not one of morals or manners but a veritable mental stoppage. The task but yesterday so lightly mastered is to-day an impossibility; interest has flown; ambition is dead,—or sleeps; and it is going to take a patient expert, with a heart, to judge between the temporary and the final, to recognize a momentary saturation point, to decide between lashing and coaxing. The temptation to personal reminiscence is irresistible here, so vivid is the remembrance of a mishandled sticking point in the past, one of such disastrous consequence to the victim that the error rankled long. There came a day, a precisely verifiable moment even, when, without warning, a hitherto serviceable and unbalking memory struck work. Right in the middle of a table of imports and exports it repudiated its job. Fed up by months and years of senseless stuffing, it lay down without a struggle, the saturation point reached. Given a bewildered protesting youngster, and a group of elders with no gleam of psychological sense to bless them, it is safe to suppose that the wrong thing will be done, and it was. Fifty years ago only two types of apprentice were recognized—the idle and the industrious, and who ever heard of such nonsense as brain-fag in the young! Memories that can work and won't work must be made to work; therefore add to the tasks, increase the pressure, cut off any odds and ends of leisure that may be visible, decree that nervous systems do not exist, and that examinations shall be passed. So much for the theory. The result has been, in one case at least, that a memory, starting out as a receptacle,

was transformed into a polished metal surface on which information is breathed in vain. It should not take much intelligence to divine that a fairly average student does not turn into an abnormally stupid one between Monday and Tuesday, unless something has gone wrong. The medical writer, drawing an analogy from a steam boiler, says: "If we continually raise the pressure of steam in a steam boiler, we finally come to a time when we can raise it no further without causing an explosion and consequent destruction of the boiler. But if we shift our efforts for a time from pressure-raising, to thickening or bracing the boiler shell, we can resume the process of raising the pressure. But after a time we must again pause to thicken or brace the shell before we can go on again": here are sticking points safely passed by patience and common sense (boilers being expensive things), and proof that a properly handled sticking point should be a new starting point.

If there were no "sticking points," there would be no oysters, no crab apples, no morons, no "busted chelas." Scientists tell us that oysters decided millions of years ago to stick in the mud and maintain a policy of inaction. This they did with the result that all bon-vivants so gratefully recognize, but they lost thereby their manvantaric chance, and that is why we meet no oysters winging their way through our woods and warbling with the nightingales. The philosophy of this can be applied all up the line.

Would that some wiser pen might make the spiritual application, and yet surely it makes itself, for what is poor complacent humanity to-day but an incarnate sticking point? Thousands of years behind schedule and slowing up all the time? Analogies come crowding,—let a fashionable hotel at the foot of a mountain furnish one. The people who rock upon the porches and play games need not interest us, for after all you cannot stick unless you start, and this they will not do. But many have gathered for climbing and some have begun. The guides move among them, erect storm-beaten men with kind and steady eyes, who whisper of a race of royal Master Guides beyond, whose servants they are. There are other guides, restless and vociferous, surrounded by restless and vociferous followers; they talk of themselves; one begins to classify the groups by the noise they make; some are marvellously attired—surely nothing less than the summit will suffice for such caps, such knickerbockers, such alpenstocks! Do not be deceived—they are going no further than their noses; to dress up and run about the foothills, shouting, is one thing; to live the life of the climber is another. A certain number will reach the first stopping place, for it is easy of access; the road is straight and smooth and green, and the place itself like a sunny glade in the dark forest depths. Here luncheon is served and there is much talk of brotherhood. Some of the least wise of the guides declare this to *be* the top, and many believe them. It is a sticking point. Those who pass on find the road still verdant, but it is steep and winds up hill to its rocky top. Grey mists overhang its rough and stony height, and all is dark beyond. Doubts assail the climber; he thinks of that comfortable hotel, that cheerful friendly luncheon, and fear walks with him—fear of the path, fear lest he be a fool. But he recalls his morning rapture and

climbs on; he struggles for surefootedness, for harmony, for adjustment with the eternal laws; and then for patience, patience with himself and with his fellows. Now he nears the half way point, and in its tranquil calm his spiritual will awakens. Here many groups stand huddled like sheep before some barrier. It is a famous sticking point and strangely populous, for those who reach it are spoiled for the foothills and loath to turn back; yet few pass on, for here stretches an abyss which each must face alone. In vain the patient guides plead for the supreme effort, in vain they whisper of the glories beyond; of "Virya, the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal Truth" and is the reward of courage; of the splendours of "the summit lost in glorious light Nirvanic," and of those great Master Guides whose "well done" awaits them. It is the immemorial sticking point of the soul of man, for as a man thinketh so is he, and here he is betrayed by his own thought progeny, by the careless thinking of all the careless years, by his inmost secret weakness. To pass *this* sticking point is to pass into reality; henceforth the pilgrim's way is clear, his Guide is more than friend or brother, and love, the magic word that crowns the first gate, crowning the last, is LOVE.

L. S.

How profound is God's sky, how high to become so blue! How short are our ladders, our rocks how miniature.

The blue of the peaks is Heaven's blue, the mountains seem so high. Mount, mount, behold the snows. Higher yet, the sky is always blue.

The sky recedes at each step. O summits pale that stretch above us!—How short are our ladders, O God, my God.—PAUL FORT.

THEOSOPHY[1]

THERE may be some here this afternoon who have no defined understanding of The Theosophical Society and its purpose. It has one admirable clause in its Constitution, with which not all its members, perhaps, are familiar: That every member has the right to believe or disbelieve in any religious system or philosophy, and to declare such belief or disbelief without affecting his standing as a member of the Society, each being required to show that tolerance of the opinions of others which he expects for his own. This is the high ideal of the spirit which really seeks truth, because no spirit not tolerant can ever find truth.

The second object of The Theosophical Society is the study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences; and we shall seek to study together certain points in religion, philosophy and science which have been the subject matter of rather sharp conflicts of public opinion during the last few months: namely, the conflict between the Fundamentalists and the Modernists, on the one hand, and the conflict between the Darwinists and the Adamists on the other hand. I use the term, Adamist, with some hesitation, because it really has a much deeper meaning than that currently given to it. For the present, I mean the traditional, literally understood descent from Adam and Eve.

The conflict between the evolutionists and the special-creationists had better come first. And it should be remembered that, while I am setting forth views which I hope may be clear, I am not speaking for The Theosophical Society. The Theosophical Society as such has no doctrines or dogmas, and no one has a right to say that this or that is the teaching of The Theosophical Society on any points outside our declared objects and the Constitution and By-Laws. Therefore, it is as a student of Theosophy that I speak, a student of truth; perhaps representing the opinion of other students of Theosophy, but with no claim to any authority, to any dogmatic orthodoxy or representative capacity for what I say. I speak only as one seeking truth.

Students of Theosophy throughout the ages have been evolutionists. That is equally true of the Gospels and the Puranas. The Puranas, the ancient records of India, teach a very clear system of evolution, pre-Darwinian, and in many ways wiser and fuller and more satisfactory than Darwin's system. If you study the Gospels, you will find that they are nowhere committed to the view of special creation, as stereotyped by its modern adherents. In the Gospels, Adam is mentioned only once, in the genealogy in Luke, which breaks the narrative, and is apparently a later addition, no part of the teaching of the Master Christ. Many of that Master's similes are similes of evolution, of

[1] A Lecture by Charles Johnston, on April 27, 1924, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

things that grow and develop. The spirit of the Gospels is evolutionary, not only upward from protoplasm, but, infinitely more important, onward toward divinity. When the Western Master says, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," he commits himself and us to an evolution of tremendous magnitude. Nothing but an evolution lasting for ages can conceivably make us mortals perfect as our Father in heaven.

Students of Theosophy, therefore, or many of them, are evolutionists; and, so far as the doctrines at present emphasized among biologists and paleontologists go, there is no very marked discrepancy. We have our own views, our own lines of study, but over much of evolution we can shake hands with the students of the Museum of Natural History. They had an interesting symposium there, the other day, concerning our putative cousins, the anthropoid apes. We, as students of Theosophy, would not hold that the anthropoid apes are absolutely separate from mankind in every quality and characteristic. We may not quite agree with the biologists about the precise relationship, but they have reached certain conclusions, which were formulated at that symposium, which many of us have long held. For example, it was there pointed out that the gorilla, the anthropoid ape which stands nearest to man, is not strictly an evolving type, but a degenerate type. The soles of his feet and his heels indicate a being which should stand upright, but the gorilla tends to stoop over, to become once more a quadruped in his later years. He is losing the power to walk upright. He is an animal which, formerly walking upright, is turning back to the quadruped stage. There are other things pointing in the same direction; for example, the skull of a baby gorilla bears a fairly close resemblance to the skull of a human baby. But each year the baby's skull grows better, while the gorilla's skull grows worse, till he finally comes to have the enormous ridges on the forehead which make him so inhuman in appearance. Therefore, it seems clear that the gorilla, physiologically our nearest kin, is a degenerate and not an evolving type. If he continued for a million years, he would not, biologically speaking, evolve into a human being.

The same thing is true of the moral nature of the anthropoids. Dr. Hornaday pointed out, in a recent book, that the baby chimpanzee is exceedingly amenable to training, he is apt at learning, and for ten or a dozen years, is a very hopeful scholar. After that, he becomes morose and ill-tempered, and tends to lose whatever approach to human sympathies he had gained. Therefore, as regards his moral nature also, he is a degenerating and not an advancing type.

So the main difference in view between students of Theosophy and the students of the Museum of Natural History is that, while they say "cousin," we might say, of the anthropoid, that he is the "nephew" or "grand-nephew" of a vanished human race. But, if you consider the matter more closely, you will find that it is not we, but he, who might be inclined to disavow the relationship. Look into his conduct; he is not given to drunkenness or corruption of any kind; he is not wantonly destructive, nor prone to evil speaking, lying and slandering. It is he who may have the right to say, "I will not own this very questionable cousin."

Regarding the evolution of the body, therefore, students of Theosophy have no great cause for disagreement with biologists, though there are still a good many points to be adjusted between us. We, as students of Theosophy, say: "You have left out half the story; you have left out the half that really counts. You have traced, imperfectly, as we think, but nevertheless suggestively, the evolution of the body; we hold also the evolution of the soul." We hold that, if there be an immense past history of the human body, much of which is still a series of gaps in the theory of the biologists; if there be, for the body, a heredity of a hundred thousand, five hundred thousand, or a million years, there is a far longer heredity of the soul. Human history in the narrow sense begins where soul and body come together and join forces. In books written by students of Theosophy, and notably in *The Secret Doctrine*, you will find the thought of the evolution of the soul worked out in great detail, and supported by the teachings of many religions, as, for example, in the Puranas: the thought of the descent of the soul meeting the ascent of the body, and the almost infinite ages over which the descent of the soul to the body is spread.

In a certain sense, the whole practical purpose of Theosophy, as a student of Theosophy may venture to conceive it, is this: to recover the power, the liberty, the light of the soul, which at present is obscured through our incarceration in the body; to win back what we have lost, the splendid heritage of the soul; and, therefore, to possess the treasures of both worlds, and from that point to begin our real human life.

So far, for the moment, the controversy between the evolutionists and the followers of special creation. Let us come to the other controversy between the Fundamentalists and the Modernists. There are certain quite definite points about which that controversy has raged, and we may note that the spirit of the controversy has been on the whole urbane, tolerant, and to that degree theosophical. Not long ago, a very interesting book was published, dealing with Erasmus, and the controversies, just four centuries ago, over kindred themes. There was the genuinely theosophical tolerance of Erasmus, beset on the one hand by fanatical and degenerate elements among the Orders of monks, and on the other by the bigotry and egotism of Martin Luther and his adherents. We know very well how those controversies of four hundred years ago worked out: the burning of Servetus, the fires of Smithfield. There is a great advance, when we note the controversy waged to-day, a noteworthy increase in theological urbanity on both sides. To that extent has the spirit of Theosophy won its way in the world. Certain questions are being hotly debated; and on these questions, students of Theosophy can, perhaps, shed some light, just because they have, as their principle and practice, the comparative study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, with the one purpose of finding truth.

We spoke a moment ago of recovering the heritage of the soul, the heritage lost in a sense, yet not lost; the heritage which will be ours when we reclaim it. We hold, as students of Theosophy, that there has been no age in the immensely long history of mankind without those who have claimed, and who have won

again, the heritage of the soul and their full divinity. That is a truth testified to by more witnesses, and by better witnesses, than any other fact in history. The witnesses are, in the Western world, those of the stature of Pythagoras and Plato, or of the stature of the Western Master, Jesus; or the Buddha. If truth can ever be established by the unanimous testimony of indisputable witnesses, then the existence of the Masters is such a truth. Take this thought; let it be for us, for the moment, only a hypothesis: the thought of the existence of a Master, who has won again the superb heritage of the soul, who has won again man's forfeited divinity. We are here, for the most part, bound by the chains of necessity. We are the soul, the "wanderer o'er eternity;" but we have come here, not of free will, but of constraint, bound by the chains of our desires, tied to earth by our earth-seeking tendencies; what in the Eastern world is called the thirst of desire has drawn us back to earth. Can we not conceive that there are those who come back, not under constraint, not bound by the chain of necessity, not oppressed by the yoke, not drawn by the thirst of desire, but of free will, through compassion; not to seek even the world itself for themselves, but in order to help us, who so sorely need help? Can we not conceive of a Master, who had painfully, through ages of infinite struggle and conflict, won back the heritage of the soul, thereafter remembering the pain and the struggle and the endless sorrows he had passed through; seeing us in the midst of these sorrows, and, tragedy of tragedies, not perceiving them, but thinking our misery to be our happiness; can we not imagine such a Master, electing to come again, perhaps many times, after all his debts were paid, after he had entered again into his divinity, coming again to help us? How would the age-old symbolism of the world represent that fact? By the symbol of the Virgin Birth, a symbol as old, perhaps, as any record of man, and always standing for the same truth. Therefore, we students of Theosophy venture to say that rightly to understand the Virgin Birth is to know that it must be true of the Western Master, to know that it represents, and is the hall-mark, in a sense, of the authenticity of his mission. Perhaps something of the same kind may be conjectured also of Mary. Perhaps she also may have been a spirit coming from afar, from some celestial realm. Perhaps that truth is represented in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, meaning that the heredity of sin, coming from Adam, did not reach her; that she was born apart from, and free from, that heredity of sin.

The hard and fast dogma which connects together the story of Adam, which we may not call a myth, because it is a symbol of profound meaning, and the mission of Jesus, his death and resurrection, is based, not on anything in the four Gospels, but on a phrase of Saint Paul, himself a mystic, speaking of Theosophy, and as a student of Theosophy. He used the phrase, imperfectly translated, incompletely understood, on which that dogma is founded: "As in the Adam all die, so in the Christ shall all be made alive." That is what Paul wrote. That is exactly the teaching which we have been considering: the dual heredity of mankind, the immensely long evolution of the body, the far longer, and, in a sense, deeply tragical, devolution of the soul; yet with the

possibility of regaining the soul's heritage, of restoring the soul's divinity. In the Adam, the body which has come up from the earth, all die. We know and recognize that fact, and are foolish if we forget it for a moment. As physical bodies, we all die, and the sooner we face the fact, the happier we shall be about it. But in the Christ, in the soul, in the divine nature, we shall all be made alive, through the help of the Master, through the help of those who belong to him. That, I think, is the true meaning of that much discussed text, turning it from a dogma of theology to a tenet of Theosophy.

So far, then, regarding the first bone of contention between the Fundamentalists and Modernists. The second is concerned with the body of the resurrection, a theme of which one speaks with hesitation, with all humility, with a knowledge that one may easily err, but with the thought that students of Theosophy may have a light to shed on it. We would suggest this: the whole solution of the mystery is in the New Testament, if we read it wisely. The teaching of the spiritual body is there set forth, with its birth, its growth, its powers; and we can see that the Master Christ was in full possession of the spiritual body, not only after the resurrection, but before the crucifixion. That extraordinary event which is called the transfiguration, consisted, in the view of students of Theosophy, in the opening of the consciousness of Peter and James and John, an opening of the spiritual eyes, so that they could behold the spiritual body which that Master already wore, and had worn, as we should believe, for ages. He himself said that Abraham had rejoiced to see his day, he saw it and was glad. We can hardly consider this to mean anything except that, in Abraham's day, that Master wore a body, as a fully developed individuality. So we conceive that Master as wearing the spiritual body for ages, wearing it during the life when he bore the name Jesus, rising with it in all its life and power from the tomb. And we may thus reconcile the conflict between the Fundamentalists and Modernists: the Master rising with the same body, yet not the earthly body. In a sense, both the views put forward are true. In a sense, neither is more than a half truth. As students of Theosophy, we think that there are two halves to that, as to every truth. In the truth of evolution, there is the evolution of the body and also the august evolution of the soul. So also the resurrection of the body is a twofold truth.

On the whole, therefore, we shall find no very sharp conflict either with the Fundamentalists or the Modernists. The symbols are eternal, and they are true. The conflict between the two parties in the Church may be reconciled by seeking truth in the spirit of truth, by looking for the other half of every truth, by showing for the opinions of others the tolerance they expect for their own. As members of The Theosophical Society, we counsel them to do this, certain that along this way, truth may be found.

If, then, there be so little of sharp discrepancy between the views of students of Theosophy, on the one hand, and the views of the science and religion of the day, on the other; if it be a question only of filling in, of supplementing, of adjusting, does it follow that our work as members of The Theosophical Society is almost done, almost completed? The truth is that only now are we

ready to begin. What is that work? We have already suggested it: the recovery of the heritage of the soul, the restoration of our lost divinity; a great adventure on which we embark, not without exemplars, not without leaders and commanders. We spoke of the ideal of a Master, further saying that there is no age in history which does not bear record to Masters who won back the heritage of the soul and regained the forfeited divinity. If that be true of the past, it is true to-day. It is true to-day, it will be true to-morrow, it will be true in every century to come. As some of us conceive it, a great part of our future work in The Theosophical Society is to make clear to those who seek—and seekers are many—to make clear, so far as we may, the reality of the existence and the spiritual powers of the Masters. That is a major part of our task, for a reason already suggested: by conquest and by birthright, they are the commanders of the human race, and they will be the effective leaders as soon as humanity has the common sense to recognize the fact. Imagine an army which could not see its leaders. Imagine an army going to war, with the leaders there, and with the men in the ranks so stupid, so dull, so blind that they could not see their commanding officers. That is a fair simile of humanity to-day, and largely of ourselves.

There is a beautiful phrase in one of Tennyson's later poems: "I hope to see my Pilot face to face, when I have crost the bar." Tennyson's own comment on that phrase is even more notable: "The Pilot has been on board all the while, but in the dark I have not seen him." We of the human race are in the dark, because we have tied a black bandage over our eyes, and will not let anyone remove it.

Our first task, then, is to show the reasonableness of our belief in living Masters. What are Masters? Supposing that you were to ask me that, how should I try to answer?

First of all, they are men; men with bodies like ourselves; not by any means "spirits" in the Spiritualistic sense; men with bodies, perhaps of finer, purer texture. The bodies of our day and generation are saturated with every disease and impurity; not so with bodies like that. Secondly, they are gentlemen. I think it was Dekker who, speaking of the Christian Master, called him "the first true gentleman that ever breathed." We should thoroughly endorse the "true gentleman"; we should be less willing to endorse the "first." Thirdly, they are warriors. And let us begin to realize, among other wholesome truths, like the truth about our bodily mortality, that we are not at the end of the age of wars, or anywhere near it. I do not know how many hundreds, or thousands, or millions of years it will be, before the day of the Great Peace, but that day is far distant, and we may as well look the fact in the face. Students of Theosophy are, perhaps, exceptional in their willingness to look certain ugly facts in the face. We are quite convinced, for example, of the existence of evil, and therefore of the reality and existence of devils, and of devils in human form. A wise and witty Frenchman said that we should be grateful to the Germans, because the belief in the Devil had almost slipped away, and they had restored it. They proved the truth, as we prove all truth, by being it.

It should be quite clear that, so long as the spirit of the Devil may possess men and nations, the devil of malice, of uncleanness, of destruction,—to talk of peace when there is no peace, is unwise. It is another of those points at which we bind a black bandage over our eyes.

Therefore, in the long war, physical as well as spiritual, the Masters, as warriors, will have their part to play. If they are to be, if by inheritance they are, the commanders, the leaders, the generals of the human race, it must follow that they have the practical wisdom that a real leader must have; and that practical wisdom we believe they possess, because they have regained the heritage of the soul. They have regained divinity, and wisdom is the very fabric of the soul and of divinity itself. "Wisdom and goodness, these are God." Therefore we hold, on the evidence of the best witnesses in all history, the wisdom and goodness of the Masters.

The next characteristic which I shall speak of will, perhaps, come as a surprise; nevertheless, it is profoundly true: Masters have a supreme sense of humour. Even in the Gospels, overshadowed by tragedy, there are touches of exquisite humour. The story of the importunate woman and the unjust judge is one of the most humorous in all literature. The judge feared not God, neither regarded man, but when the importunate woman besieged him, he surrendered and avenged her. That he feared not God, and regarded not man, is told simply to bring out the point of humour. So it is with that other phrase: to strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel. We have only to make the mental picture of a man trying to swallow a camel, to see how humorous the image is.

In the Buddha's teachings, there are admirable examples of humour. The Buddha often taught by describing former incarnations of those to whom he was speaking. A certain disciple was held back by certain difficulties. The Buddha described a remote incarnation, in which that disciple had been an animal, grey all over, and with very long ears. In that incarnation, the disciple comported himself in a way which accounted for his present moral limitations. It was a parable, but a notably humorous one. Perhaps the Masters are compensated by the sense of humour, when they have to deal with some of our peculiarities; without it, they might long ago have given up the task in despair.

The Masters have undying courage; always the readiness for absolute self-sacrifice; sacrifice of everything which even Masters may hold dear, because they have realized that sacrifice is the fundamental law of the universe. "God created man together with sacrifice," says the *Bhagavad Gita;* and it has been well said that God himself made the first sacrifice when he created the universe. Therefore, realizing that sacrifice is the sovereign reality, it is the law which Masters have laid down for themselves, and which they follow with that perfect fidelity which is theirs.

The Masters are immortal in their continuous, conscious being, because they have recovered the immortality of the soul. They are powerful beyond our imagination, because the divinity, which is our heritage when we choose to

claim it, is already unfolded in them, and shares with them its treasures and its powers.

So the ideal of Masters is, in a sense, entirely natural: Men, gentlemen, warriors, endowed with a sense of humour, with indomitable courage, with the genius of sacrifice, and with the powers which we can conceive as latent in our souls. We are, as Wordsworth finely said, "haunted for ever by the eternal Mind," and there is not one of us who, in his best moments, does not feel that haunting presence, and that it is the only thing in life that is worth living for. There is a beautiful phrase of Tennyson's, which speaks exactly to that point; he is recording the inspiration which had come to himself:

> The light retreated,
> The landskip darken'd,
> The melody deaden'd,
> The Master whispered
> "Follow the Gleam."

Follow the Gleam. Follow the inner light through the darkness, till the darkness gives place to light. The ideal, therefore, of Masters is sane, wise, normal, healthy, wholesome in every way. It is a bright ideal of the sunshine; there is nothing of darkness or shadow about it. It is the ideal which is the salvation of humanity, when humanity comes to wake up to its desperate need. We may remember here the wise words of Ruskin: "Exactly in the degree in which you can find creatures greater than yourself, to look up to, in that degree you are ennobled yourself, and, in that degree, happy." What inspiration, what happiness, then, awaits us, when we find the Masters, to look up to!

What is the first practical, reasonable thing to do, to meet this thoroughly practical and reasonable situation, as we conceive the reality of Masters to be? To endeavour ourselves to do what they have done before us: to follow in their footsteps along the small, old path which the Seers knew and trod. To do the same things: first of all, to understand this dual heredity of ours. There is the body with its marvellous gifts and powers. It represents ages of achievement by nature. There is the soul, infinitely more wonderful, with its proved powers in their luminous divinity. Let us seek, therefore, the soul and the things of the soul. Seeking, we shall find. There are infinite riches of instruction ready to hand. Those who have spent years with the ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences can assure you that there is abundant instruction, thoroughly understood, systematized and organized, for those who are willing to seek and find. Every step of approach to Masters, every step of approach to our own inheritance in the soul, every step of the way back to our divinity is charted; there are detailed, intelligible instructions, there is guidance for us, if we have the purity of heart, the unselfishness, the loyalty and the valour to set forth on that same way.

Consider the manner in which geologists, for example, have laboured for generations, in many countries, creating a body of knowledge which is one,

consistent, uniform, with a fine texture binding it together: all these human minds seeing into the mysteries of past time, the mysteries hidden in the rocks. After all, these rocks exist to-day, they are not in the past; yet the intelligence of those men has seen in the rocks of to-day the millions of years of the past. By constructive imagination, they have projected that almost infinite past backward out of to-day. Geology is one, though geologists are many.

Or take the simile of Shelley's, where he calls the poetry of the nations "episodes to that great Poem which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world." Consider the superb achievement of the world's poetry, one of the treasures of mankind, in literal truth the work of one great mind, of the infinite soul of man. What is needed is, that we, students of Theosophy, we, seekers after our divine inheritance, shall unite with the same oneness of heart, the same singleness of purpose, to discover the history of the soul in the immense geologic ages, in the eons of its spiritual development. We shall recover the inspiration and the beauty, the elements of divine shining; we shall recover them in life, as the poets have, in the one great poem of the world. There is our task. These are our marching orders.

One thought more, and we are done. We have spoken of humanity as a blind army of privates, who cannot see their leaders, and of the Masters as men and gentlemen, as warriors, commanders. Let this be our last thought: the soldiers are not waiting for their commanders; the commanders are waiting for the soldiers to take the bandages from their eyes. Humanity is not a helpless, hopeless sufferer, waiting for the Masters to come and take command. The Pilots are already on board, but in our darkness we do not see them. We are not those who are waiting. Those who are waiting are the Masters of Wisdom.

The one-talented man was not judged for the mis-use of his gift, but for its non-use.—AMBROSE SHEPHERD.

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

XIV

St. Francis Xavier

Part II

THERE is another side of Xavier's character—the side of worldly wisdom—which must be shown; worldly wisdom used, not for self, but in the service of Christ.

Ignatius had sent out other members of his Company to work under Xavier in India, and Xavier was responsible for their spiritual direction as well as for their outer activities. Their unfitness and their disagreements, in spite of their good qualities, added very heavily to the burdens Francis Xavier carried. It was their need of direction in their various undertakings that called forth a considerable portion of his letters. Those letters reveal the different sides of Xavier's character, and are very precious documents.

Among the recruits who reached India in 1548 was a Belgian, Gaspar by name, a man of exhaustless energy, in gratitude for which, Ignatius is said to have prayed: "Lord, send us Belgians." After several tentative plans, Xavier finally decided to send Father Gaspar on a mission to a city at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, the city that the poet Milton, for the sake of euphony, called Ormus, usually spelt Ormuz, famous and fabulous for wealth, and equally infamous for depravity. It was a meeting-place for the uncontrolled and licentious of three continents, where Asiatics and Africans and Europeans could, by turns, contribute whatever the others might lack of complete moral depravity. To this centre of luxurious self-indulgence, Father Gaspar went alone; and, for his guidance, Xavier wrote a very long letter of instructions.[6] The letter shows what Xavier's own methods had probably been. It is a very valuable record. Its worldly wisdom, directed to the guidance of a man of religion, would make it a fruitful study to-day, both for people in religion and also for people in the world.

In it, Xavier reminds Father Gaspar that the undertaking will come to naught, unless he take as his first duty the care of his own inner state, the clearing of his conscience, and a seeking of the Divine Will at every step. He gives Gaspar directions for the care of the poor and ignorant, the teaching and catechizing of children, etc.,—directions which Xavier had tested in his own practice. He directs Gaspar to go privately, as soon as he reaches Ormuz, to the men of best repute there, and to inquire of them about dominant evils, prevalent frauds, etc. This will give him, a newcomer, the benefit of their

[6] This letter is to be found in H. J. Coleridge's collection, Vol. II, pp. 109–138.

longer residence and their acquaintance with people and things. Information gleaned in these private interviews with the best citizens, will furnish material for use in public as well as private ministrations. For his sermons, Gaspar is to choose "clear and unquestionable truths, which tend to the regulation of manners and the reprehension of vices"; he is to avoid "sublime speculation, perplexed questions, scholastic controversies"; he is to make "no display of erudition or of memory, from the old Fathers." "Let your sermon set before their eyes, and let them see in it plainly as in a mirror, their own restless devices, their cunning artifices, their most vain hopes and imaginations, all the deceitful designs which they entertain in their souls. . . . But to set forth what their own interior feelings are, you must first know them; and the only way to know them is to be much in their company, to study them, observe them, pray with them. So turn over and over again these living books; it is from these that you will gain everything—how to teach them with efficacy, how easily to act on and affect and turn and move sinners whither it behooves them to be moved for their souls' salvation."

Then, in contrast with their wretched sinfulness, Gaspar is to bring before their eyes, Christ's life and passion. How unmistakable is the centre of Francis Xavier's interest! No matter what his topic might be, in conversation or in writing, sooner or later he reached the point where he could no longer keep silence about what he loved—Christ and his passion. "You are to mingle with all these considerations the remembrance of the cross, the wounds, and death of Christ, by which He vouchsafed to atone for our sins; but you are to do this in as moving and pathetic a manner as possible, by figures and colloquies proper to excite emotions in the mind, such as cause in our hearts a deep sorrow for our sins, on account of the offence done to God thereby, even so as to draw tears from the eyes of your audience, who are then to be led to make resolutions of cleansing their consciences as soon as possible by confession, and of celebrating their reconciliation to God by due reception of the holy Communion. This is the one true idea which I wish you would propose to yourself for preaching profitably."

He warns Gaspar against making any personal charges in his public utterances. When it becomes necessary to admonish some vicious official or other public personage, it must be done privately. If public speakers of the present day were to follow that wise counsel of Xavier's, what headlines would disappear from our newspapers! Father Gaspar is next shown how to proceed in a difficult and disagreeable private interview. "Let it be a matter to which you pay continued and unrelaxed attention, to show yourself, to all those with whom you have to do, with a kind and calm countenance, getting rid of every sign of severity, overbearingness, arrogance, suspicion, sourness, anger, and threatening. You ought much rather to put on an appearance of courteous affability, using the gentlest and most winning smiles, and the like, whenever you have to reprove any one in private on account of some fault of his which requires admonition. Temper the sternness of your reproof with the serenity of your air, a smiling countenance, and gentle glances, and much more by the

civility of well-mannered words. These things are the honey and preserves which are mixed with and which season the bitterness of the dose, unpleasant in itself, and which will turn out of no use if it be administered without some such condiment, to men whose stomachs are likely to be turned by it." What a student of humanity this letter shows Xavier to have been!

Here are some other directions given Gaspar in regard to private interviews. Xavier tells him that certain men whose consciences have been for a moment aroused, will inquire how to make amends for past wrongs. Gaspar is to "rake down" to specific wrongs, especially in the matter of fraudulent gains—and is to insist upon immediate restitution. "If they have injured the reputation of any one, let them retract what they have said; or if they are engaged in unlawful attachments and have been living in sin, cause them to break off those criminal engagements, and remove at once the occasions of their crime. However solemnly and seriously they may promise to do these things at a future time, it is not safe to trust them without the actual performance of their engagement. Let them perform beforehand what they declare they will do. There is not any time more proper to exact from sinners these duties, the performance of which is as necessary as it is difficult. For when once their fervour and excitement of mind have grown cold, and their familiar enticements have begun to drag them back with fatal persuasiveness to the sins to which they have been accustomed and which they have but just left off for the time, it will be in vain to ask them to keep their promise."

Not the least wise and valuable suggestion made to Father Gaspar is the recommendation to be *motherly* in dealing with certain individuals who are backward and shy: "Meet them more than half way, telling them that they are neither the only nor the first persons who have fallen into such foul sins, that you have met with far worse sins of that kind than those can be which they want the confidence to tell you. Impute a great part of their offence to the violence of the temptation, the seductiveness of the occasion, and the concupiscence innate in all men. More than this, I tell you that in dealing with such persons, we must sometimes go so far and so low, in order to loosen the chains of this miserable shame in these unhappy persons whose tongues the devil has by his cunning tied up, as of our own accord to indicate in general the sins of our own past lives, so to elicit from these guilty souls the confession of the sin which they will otherwise hide, to their irreparable loss. For what can a true and fervent charity refuse to pay for the safety of those souls who have been redeemed with the blood of Jesus Christ? But to understand when this is proper to be done, how far to proceed, and with what precautions, is what the guidance of the Spirit and your experience must teach you at the time in each particular conjuncture."

Another of Xavier's wise and prudent recommendations concerns the acceptance of gifts which may be offered. The Royal Treasury having undertaken to bear the expense of the mission to Ormuz, Xavier recommends that Father Gaspar shall accept from the Treasury whatever he needs, and shall accept nothing from any one else. "What others offer you, even of their own accord,

reject; for it is of signal importance for the authority and liberty of one who has the charge of souls, to be under no obligation on the score of the supply of his food, which is, in fact, to owe his life and breath, to any one of those whom it is his duty to direct in the way of salvation, and to correct and pull up whenever they go astray. The common saying is very true as to gifts of this kind: 'He that takes, is taken'; for he loses all confidence as to finding fault with or using his right of censure with a man towards whom he has allowed himself to take up the humble position of a dependent, and thus bound himself to him by the reverence due to a patron."

Xavier makes an exception of gifts which have slight intrinsic value, such as fruits—these may be received for the sake of cultivating the good will of the donor, but should at once be sent off to some public hospital in order that no suspicion may be incurred of seeking favours for oneself. The last direction given in the long letter is that Father Gaspar shall read it at least once a week.

With Ormuz and many other fields of work well planned, Xavier sailed from a Malay port for Japan. It would be a mistake to think that the voyage to Japan was merely a reduplication of the one from Lisbon to India. Dangerous and unpleasant as the first voyage was, it seems, in comparison with the second, like luxurious travelling. He left Lisbon under the Portuguese flag, as the honoured guest of the new Governor whom the King was sending out to the colonies. Reckless and hardened adventurers as most of his fellow-passengers were, in that Portuguese vessel, they were stil Europeans, and they shared certain common traditions. Bloodshed or death would cause them no quaver—but in the long-drawn-out stress of disease, tempest, or ship-wreck, even those dare-devil spirits would welcome one who held out a crucifix, and spoke comfortable words to cheer them. When Xavier sailed for Japan, t was under the Chinese flag, which the Chinese captain of the vessel would have hauled down with little hesitation, replacing it with the black flag of piracy. The Chinese crew showed no regard whatever for Xavier or for the agreement they had made with him—and, when in danger, they wanted none of his ministrations. They had a convenient and pliable god set up in the stern of the boat, and they consulted him, when danger threatened. The replies the god gave indicated strong animosity for the heathen European who was on board; indeed, Xavier was in constant danger of being murdered. The missioners suffered also from the variability of the god's mind about the voyage —usually, the god's mind was set contrary to the wind, and Xavier, eager to reach the journey's end, was never free from the fear of being abandoned upon some barren island. At last, however, Japan was reached; they disembarked at the little town to which the young man, Yajiro, belonged, and Xavier, with his companions, was warmly welcomed by Yajiro's kinsfolk, and thirteen months were spent in that town.

The Japanese campaign was altogether different from that conducted in India and in the Malay region. In those countries, it was the ignorant and outcast that Xavier met; in Japan, it was the learned and noble. The method that succeeded in India was ill-fated in Japan. The mendicant's garb did

not win the respect of the Japanese nobles, and even the street children, whom we have seen flocking about him in India, hooted and derided. In view of that disfavour, Xavier changed his tactics, laid aside his beggar's rags, bought handsome Japanese clothing, presented letters of recommendation from the commandant in India, and represented himself (as he could, in all truth) as a special agent of the Portuguese government. He was received cordially enough in some places, and was given permission to preach his religion. A few accepted the new belief, but conversions did not move apace. The Japanese listened eagerly and with intelligence and they asked many questions; two were reiterated. One was: Why did Xavier's God of love, whom not to know is death, leave Japan so long without knowledge of himself? The second question was: If Xavier's teachings were true, why did not the Chinese, those venerable people of antiquity, know something about them? In their years of intercourse with China, the Japanese had heard no mention made of Christianity. The Chinese would not have failed to speak to them about the Christian religion, they thought, if that religion were true. That second question showed the Japanese habit of referring, in all matters, to China as a standard of truth and right; and, by reason of that Japanese habit, another lure was gradually formed in Xavier's mind,—the lure of China, his last illusion.

It was not only his mendicant's garb that Xavier had to change in Japan. He was wise enough, when need arose, to bend his opinions to suit occasions. We have seen that in India he had regretted the Portuguese absorption in commercial interests, because that absorption was detrimental to his own aim. He perceived, however, beneath the civility and cordiality of the Japanese nobles, and their toleration of his preaching, their hope and wish that, through him, they might make connection with Portuguese traders. He found it necessary, in order to win continued toleration, to invite, even to urge the coming of Portuguese trading ships. Further, in order that the Portuguese traders might not find their hopes frustrated, he counselled the ware they should bring, namely, pepper. He added that the amount of pepper brought should be limited to one ship load, because the value of the pepper would fall if the Japanese were to see too great a supply.

The expected harvest of souls in Japan was not reaped; it was almost white, almost ready for the scythe; a slight diversion from the track—toward China—then the full harvest of both those mighty countries would be gathered in. This new illusion having risen in Xavier's mind, it crowded out all feeling of disappointment on the score of Japan; it was the last illusion, the final dream, —the lure of China. Death ended Xavier's course before this final dream was shattered by hard fact. It is not entirely clear how he imagined the quick reform which he looked for, was to take place in Japan, as a result of the adoption of Christianity by the Chinese. He had painted a very dark picture of the moral depravity which, he thought, characterized the Japanese houses of religion (Buddhist); and the Japanese priests seemed to him deliberately insincere. He must have believed his own statements on those matters. Perhaps he was

deceived by the intelligence of the class with which he made connection—the nobles, in contrast with the outcasts of India; the numerous questions they asked appeared to indicate genuine interest. At all events, he brooded over conditions in Japan, and over that reiterated question the Japanese asked: why had not China in its venerable antiquity heard of Christian truth? As he brooded, he began to weave a spell, and to make of China a new El Dorado. He resolved to meet that objection of the Japanese, and to remove their excuse for not accepting Christianity. He would go to that ancient land, "superior to all Christian states in the practice of justice and equity"; China would accept his truth, and, as a consequence, Japan would immediately follow the Chinese example. He wrote to this effect, to his friends, in far-off Europe. "Opposite to Japan lies China, an immense empire, enjoying profound peace, and which, as the Portuguese merchants tell us, is superior to all Christian states in the practice of justice and equity. The Chinese whom I have seen in Japan and elsewhere, and whom I got to know, are white in colour, like the Japanese, are acute, and eager to learn. In intellect they are superior even to the Japanese. Their country abounds in plenty of all things, and very many cities of great extent cover its surface. The cities are very populous; the houses ornamented with stone roofings, and very elegant. All reports say that the empire is rich in every sort of produce, but especially in silk. I find, from the Chinese themselves, that amongst them may be found many people of many different nations and religions, and, as far as I could gather from what they said, I suspect that among them are Jews and Mahometans.

"Nothing leads me to suppose that there are Christians there. I hope to go there during this year, 1552, and penetrate even to the Emperor himself. China is that sort of kingdom, that if the seed of the Gospel is once sown, it may be propagated far and wide. And moreover, if the Chinese accept the Christian faith, the Japanese would give up the doctrines which the Chinese have taught them."[7]

The last lap of the race is before him. It is 1552, and he is forty-six years old, still on the green side of fifty. He feels no diminution of vigour, he writes; but his hair is white, and that, perhaps, shows how he had poured his vitality into his tasks. A new and worthy goal awaits him,—the last citadel. Overthrow that remaining fortress (nothing more is needed thereto than the preaching of the Passion), and the gates of all the Orient will fall; Christ will take possession of his own, Victor and King. Once more Xavier hastens back to India, to compose quarrels, to untangle mistakes, and to plan for all those precious souls, from Goa on the west shore of the Hindustan peninsula, around the Asian coast and islands, to Japan. With his captains and lieutenants posted as advantageously as is possible on that widely extended battle-line, Xavier prepares for the *grande entrée*. For, profiting by the experience in Japan, where the beggar's guise had not been respected, he plans now a scene of magnificence that shall impress even the opulent lords of the Flowery King-

[7] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 347 ff.

dom. He will not go as pilgrim and beggar, but as ambassador, Ambassador of Heaven; he will go in company with an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from the King of Portugal. Without difficulty Xavier induced a loyal lay friend, a wealthy trader, to assume the expense of the ambassadorial equipage. The initial outlay, Xavier reasoned, would be amply remunerated by the trade concessions his friend would receive from the Chinese. It was to be a "field of the cloth of gold." The splendour of the secular ambassador would suggest that the grandeur of the King of Kings outshines all human conception and representation; for the ambassador's overlord, is, in his turn (though King of Portugal) only a fief of that sovereign Lord.

Thus the plans were made. From the famous and infamous Ormuz, Father Gaspar brought brocades and other Persian textiles, to be used as gifts for the Chinese Emperor. A galleon was outfitted, such as, floating down the sun's path or the moon's, might appear even to the wealth of China an argosy of golden sail, a visitant from a diviner world. All had been brought together in the Malay harbour, and the two ambassadors—of Heaven and of Portugal—were ready for their embassy. Then a sudden bolt fell. The local governor of the harbour confiscated the splendour, and used force to prevent Xavier's friend from proceeding with the enterprise. The governor's motives were, first, jealousy; then fear lest the trade concessions to be made, should interfere with his own private smuggling gains. Xavier threatened the governor with civil and ecclesiastical punishment; but both Portugal and Rome were too distant to terrify this desperado, who laughed alike at the threat of prison and of excommunication. The governor finally sent a crew of his own to man Xavier's romantic pinnace—"Holy Cross," it had been christened—saying that, with conditions thus changed, the voyage might proceed. Xavier decided to go, shorn of splendour, his plans thwarted, and troubled in heart over the expense he had led his friend to incur without chance now of any remuneration. Frustration of hope marked this last adventure from beginning to end. In six weeks' time, with three companions, he reached an islet about one hundred miles from Canton, which was his immediate objective. From August until November, he tried unsuccessfully to induce some Cantonese smugglers (who came to this islet of San Chan to trade with the Portuguese), to get him into the city. Promises were made but never kept; and, after another fruitless month, Xavier, who was always fertile in resource, began to think of the possibility of sailing to Siam, and thence entering China afoot. It was not to be. He had crowded his forty-six years with many labours, and had won a period of rest. Fever rescued him from further undertakings. In a scant shelter of straw, with his beloved crucifix in his hand and on his lips, he left behind this sluggish world, two days after Christmas, 1552.

Ardent, wonderful boy! Who does not see his deficiencies? Who can emulate his devotion and his zeal? The defects of another, like the duty of another, may be full of danger to those who observe them. To shame our own defects out of existence by reverent study of his virtues—that would be our profitable course. Too much has been said in this sketch, about Xavier

himself; too little of the Great Companion in whose service he laboured. It would be a matter of pain and surprise to Xavier himself to find so many pages taken up with his own performances; "to love, praise and serve God" would be the account he would wish to have given. In truth, Christ is the foreground and the background in the picture of Xavier's life,—the centre and the circumference of his thought and being. His outer life is full of adventure and romance,—it lends itself easily to treatment and valuation according to the standards of the world. His inner life is hidden in Christ, inaccessible to "the world's coarse thumb and finger." A hint can be given, however, of what that inner life was. "And now I have nothing more to tell you," Xavier wrote back from the East to his friends in Europe, "except that so great is the intensity and abundance of the joy which God is accustomed to bestow upon those workmen of His vineyard who labour diligently in cultivating this part of the same, that for my part I do really believe that if there is in this life any true and solid happiness, it is here. It often happens to me to hear one[8] whose lot it is to labour in this field cry out, 'O Lord, I beseech Thee overwhelm me not now in this life with so much delight, or at least, since in Thy boundless goodness and mercy Thou dost so overwhelm me, take me away to the abode of the blessed. For any one who has once known what it is to taste in his soul Thy ineffable sweetness must of necessity think it very bitter to live any longer without seeing Thee face to face.'"[9]

Such was the man, Xavier, and such his love for Christ. In complete devotion and utter forgetfulness of self, he gave himself to praise and serve his Master. Let us turn to our own spiritual profit some of the lessons suggested by his life.

C. C. CLARK.

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[8] This is the humility characteristic of the saints; they for ever try to avoid mentioning themselves.

[9] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 162.

We are always praying if we are doing our duty, and are doing it to please God.

—LASANCE.

THE CREST JEWEL OF WISDOM

ATTRIBUTED TO SHANKARA ACHARYA

VI

BUILT up of unreality is the false conception that this is the real world. What division can there be in the one Substance, without mutation, shape or difference?

What division can there be in the one Substance, in which there is no distinction of seer, seeing, seen, without mutation, shape or difference?

What division can there be in the one Substance, like the world-ocean infinitely full, without mutation, shape or difference?

What division can there be in the secondless, supreme Real, free from difference, wherein the cause of delusion melts away, as darkness melts away in light?

What trace can there be of division in the supreme Real, the very Self of unity? Even in dreamlessness, which is joy only, who has ever found division?

After the awakening to the supreme Real, in the Self which is Being, the Eternal, undivided. this world no longer is, whether past, present or to come; as there is no serpent in the rope, nor a drop of water in the river, when the mirage has been recognized. (406)

This duality is Glamour only; transcendentally it is non-dual: thus says the Scripture, and this is immediately experienced in dreamlessness.

That the attribute has no being apart from the substance, has been perceived by the wise. The distinction is born of illusion, as in the serpent imagined in the rope.

This distinction has its root in the imagination; when the imagination ceases, it has no longer being. Therefore, concentrate the imagination in the higher Self, whose form is hidden.

In soul-vision he who has gained wisdom recognizes within his heart that mysterious being which is perpetual illumination, formed of perfect joy, incomparable, immeasurable, ever free, in which is no desire, boundless as the ether, without parts, without sense of separateness, as the perfect, the Eternal. (410)

In soul-vision he who has gained wisdom recognizes within his heart that reality, void of the changes of the manifested world, of unimaginable being, in essence equal, peerless, eternal mind, far above bondage, revealed by the sacred teachings, everlasting, revealed by us, as the perfect, the Eternal.

In soul-vision he who has gained wisdom recognizes within his heart that being, unfading, undying, which by its very nature can know no setting, still as the ocean depths, beyond name, wherein potencies and changes have come to rest, immemorial, full of peace, the one, as the perfect, the Eternal.

Intending the inner mind upon it, behold the Self in its own being, its partless sovereignty. Cut thy bonds stained with the stains of the world, by strong effort make thy manhood fruitful.

Come to consciousness of the Self dwelling within thyself, free from all disguises, which is being, consciousness, bliss, undivided; so thou buildest no more for going out.

Freed from the burden of the body, cast aside as a corpse, seen as but the shadow of the man, a mere reflection, a fruit of works, he of mighty soul puts it on no more. (415)

Drawing near to that being whose form is ever stainless illumination, joy, put far from thee this disguise, inert, impure; let it not even be remembered again, for to remember as an object of desire, that thing that has been vomited, brings contempt.

Burning this up root and all, in the fire, the Self of being, the Eternal beyond separateness, thereafter he, excellent in wisdom, stands as the Self, through the Self, which is pure illumination, bliss.

The body is knotted of the threads of former works, unclean as the blood of kine; whether it depart or remain, the knower of the Real regards it not, as his life dissolves in the Self of bliss, the Eternal.

Knowing the Self, the partless bliss, in its true being, desiring what, or with what motive will the knower of the Real pamper the body?

But of him who has attained, free even in life, who has gained union, this is the fruit: to taste without and within the essence of being and bliss in the Self.

Of ceasing from self-indulgence, illumination is the fruit; of illumination, the silencing of desire is the fruit; from realizing the bliss of the Self, peace is the fruit; this, verily, is the fruit of silencing desire. (421)

So long as the latter of these is unattained, the former has not borne its fruit. Supreme content, the peerless joy of the Self, is liberation.

Not to be perturbed by the griefs of the manifested world is the renowned fruit of wisdom. Nor, after he has gained discernment, will a man work again the many blameworthy works done in the time of his delusion.

To be freed from the unreal is the fruit of wisdom; to be entangled in it is seen to be the fruit of unwisdom. If there be not this distinction between wise and unwise, as in the recognition of the mirage, what then is the reward of the wise?

When the heart's knot of unwisdom is destroyed without remainder, how can the presence of objects be a cause of entanglement for him who is without desire? (425)

Where no dynamic mind-image arises in the presence of objects of desire, this is the perfection of freedom from self-indulgence; when the feeling of "I" no longer arises, this is the perfection of illumination; when the being dissolved in the Eternal returns no more, this is the perfection of silence.

Rich is he, to be honoured among beings, who, because he stands ever in the nature of the Eternal, is free in soul from the tyranny of outer objects, regarding as little as does a sleeping child the enjoyments deemed alluring

by others, who views this world as a world of dream, who dwells in a certain realm possessing his soul, reaping the fruit of infinite holiness.

That saint stands firm in wisdom who enjoys the bliss of being, for his Self is dissolved in the Eternal, he is changeless, risen above action.

That condition is said to be spiritual wisdom, which is all consciousness without sense of separateness, plunged deep in the unity of the Eternal and the Self stripped of every veil.

In whom this wisdom is well established, he is said to stand firm in wisdom. He whose wisdom thus stands firm, whose bliss is unbroken, by whom this world is well nigh forgotten, he is said to be free even in life. (430)

He who, with soul dissolved, is yet awake, free from the bondage of waking life, whose illumination is without dynamic mind-images, he is said to be free even in life.

In whom the circle of birth and death has come to rest, who is individual though without separateness, whose imagination is free from imaginings, he is said to be free even in life.

Even though the body remains, he regards it as a shadow; he is without the thought of "I" and "my": this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

He seeks not to delve into the past or to unveil the future; he is the disinterested spectator: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

He regards as equal all things in this world full of contrasts, with quality set against fault: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life. (435)

Whether good or evil fortune come, he regards it as equal in the Self, remaining unchanged by either: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Because the saint's heart abides savouring the bliss of the Eternal, he distinguishes not between what is within and what is without: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Without the thought of "my" and "I" in what is to be done by the body and the powers, he stands as the disinterested spectator: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Who knows the Self is one with the Eternal, according to the power of the Scriptures, who is free from the bondage of the world: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

In whom no thought of "I" arises regarding the body and its powers, nor does he separate himself in thought from what is other than these: he is said to be free even in life. (440)

Who through wisdom discerns that there is no division between the hidden Self and the Eternal, nor between the Eternal and the manifested world: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Who bears it with equal mind, whether he be honoured by the holy or afflicted by evil men: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Into whom flow all manifested things sent forth by the Supreme, as rivers of water enter the ocean's treasure house, causing no change, because he and they are one Being, that saint has attained liberation.

For him who has discerned the true being of the Eternal, the ancient circle

of birth and death has ceased. If it remain, he has not discerned the being of the Eternal; it still lies beyond him.

But if they say that birth and death still beset him because of the impetus of dynamic mind-images, this is not so; the dynamic mind-image loses its power through discernment of oneness with Being. (445)

As the most lustful man's desire ceases before his mother, so is it for the wise when the Eternal is known in fulness of bliss.

The Scripture says that even in him who has attained to meditation the conviction of the reality of outer things remains, because his former works are working themselves out.

As long as pleasure and pain are felt, so long are former works working themselves out. The arising of the fruit is because of former works; where there are no longer works, there is no fruit.

From the discernment that "I am the Eternal", works heaped up through hundreds of millions of ages are dissolved, as dream-works on waking.

Whatever be done in time of dream, whether good or manifest evil, after he is awake how can it visit him with heaven or hell? (450)

When he has come to know the true Self, which rises detached like the sky, he is no more entangled in future works for ever.

As the ether enclosed in the jar is not tainted by the smell of the wine, so the true Self within the vesture is not tainted by the properties of the vesture.

The momentum of works begun before the sunrise of wisdom does not cease without bearing fruit after wisdom is gained; it is like an arrow aimed and shot at a mark.

The arrow shot with the thought that there is a tiger does not halt when it is seen to be a cow, but quickly pierces the mark because of its impetus.

Works already entered on retain their energy even in the case of those who have attained wisdom; only through being experienced are they consumed. Former works, works accumulated, and future works melt away in the fire of perfect wisdom. They who perceive the oneness of the Eternal and the Self, and stand ever in the realization of that oneness, for them the three kinds of works exist no longer; they become the Eternal, free from limitations.

For the saint who stands in the Self, through the oneness of the Self with the perfect Eternal which is free from the qualities of the vestures, the myth of the reality of former works exists no longer, as for him who is awake the myth of bondage to things seen in dream no longer exists.

For he who has awaked no longer keeps the thought of "I and my and that" with regard to the dream body and the world belonging to it; he comes to himself simply by waking.

He no longer wishes to gain the things of his dream, nor does he seek to grasp the dream world. But if he still pursues the things of the mirage, it is certain he has not yet awaked from sleep.

He who dwells in the supreme Eternal stands ever in the Self, beholding nothing else; as is the memory of something seen in dream, so for the wise man are eating and other bodily acts.

Though the body which is built up by former works continues to work out the works that are entered on, these works are not bound up with the beginningless Self, for the Self is not built up by works. (460)

"Unborn, eternal, everlasting," says the Scripture, which cannot speak in vain; therefore, what building of works can there be for him who stands in the Self?

Works entered on retain their force so long as the body is held to be the Self; but to think of the body as the Self is false; therefore, let works entered on be renounced.

Even the building of the body by former works is also an illusion; whence can come the reality of what is only imagined? How can there be the birth of what is unreal?

How can there be the destruction of what has not been born? How can there be former works of what does not exist, if through wisdom the effects of unwisdom are dissolved, root and all?

How does this body subsist? The Scripture declares the development of works exists, to bring growth to those who are full of doubt and inert in mind, through the perception of external things, but not to establish in the wise the belief in the reality of the body and outer things. (465)

The Eternal is complete, beginningless, endless, changeless, one, secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is the sum of being, the sum of consciousness, everlasting, the sum of bliss, without action, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is the one hidden essence, full, unending, in all directions conscious, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal cannot be diminished or excelled, the Eternal cannot be apprehended, nor does it need any support; it is one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is without qualities, without parts, subtile, without separateness, without stain, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity. (470)

The Eternal is in its nature indefinable, not to be reached by word or thought, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is the riches of being, in itself perfect, pure, awakened, unlike aught else, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

C. J.

(To be concluded)

A STUDY OF CONVERSION

MR. HAROLD BEGBIE, in his new book, *More Twice-Born Men*, has made a remarkable contribution to the literature and *raison d'être* of religious conversion. He narrates, or paraphrases, the autobiographical accounts of seven conversions amongst representative and prominent University men in England and the United States. These were in each case effected through the influence of one man, who prefers to remain anonymous to safeguard the continuance of his work, and who is designated throughout the book as F. B. This man himself experienced a deep and abiding conversion, which is also graphically described;—and he has spent his life since that event in the truest kind of missionary labour, seeking the reformation, one by one, of men who like himself were not "down and out" as the world sees such things, but who nevertheless lived divided, sinning, unhappy, worldly lives. Mr. Begbie describes F. B. as "so unimpressive" that he repels many people at the start. His American voice and manners grated on English sensibilities, yet sooner or later his "inner light" shone through. "He helps one to believe that the truth may yet be an even greater force in human affairs than personality" (p. 20).

Yet Mr. Begbie, despite his sincere and obvious admiration, is frankly unsympathetic to many of F. B.'s methods, and also "disapproves vigorously" his explanations about his work—his "theological opinions." We feel that Mr. Begbie hardly does justice to one who might be termed the hero of his book, because F. B.'s experience has enabled him, perhaps, to see something of the real significance of what lies back of, and vitalizes, time-worn Christian phraseology,—while Mr. Begbie's mind prefers to reinterpret in terms of modern psychology, or to discount entirely, what does not fit into his own experience. "His mysticism," he writes of F. B., "might suggest even a surrender to superstition. He attributes, without question, to the Deity certain motions in himself which another might well assign to movements of his own unconsciousness. For example, it is his habit to wake very early from sleep, and to devote an hour or more to complete silence of soul and body; in this silence he is listening to the voice from heaven, and the voice comes to him, and he receives his orders for the day—he is to write to one man, he is to call upon another, and so on. Psychologists would tell him that those orders proceed from his own unconsciousness, and are the fruit of sleep's mentation, the harvest of his yesterday's thought and solicitudes. Such an explanation, of course, does not rob these motions of their spiritual value" (p. 21). Mr. Begbie thinks his explanation will help "those whose conception of Deity entirely prevents them from believing either His interposition or His colloquies with the human soul"—which latter he apparently believes "degrade the human spirit to the mechanical level of a gramophone" (pp. 21–2). No student

of Theosophy but would realize that Mr. Begbie has completely failed in understanding at this point. He has not grasped the significance of such personal experience on F. B.'s part, and in consequence inevitably weakens his entire presentation, and misses the vital essence of F. B.'s work. After all, it takes a mystic to comprehend a mystic, and mystic Mr. Begbie is not! Were it only F. B.'s "unconsciousness" which was operative,—the unconsciousness of one described as unattractive often to the point of antagonism—how account for the power to produce such marvellous changes in the hearts and natures of men?

This point is additionally important, because it reveals a misconception due to sheer lack of logic. It is also a stumbling-block in the way of those modern psychologists who are at the same time students of mysticism. This has been pointed out before in the QUARTERLY as true of so acute and intellectual a writer as Miss Evelyn Underhill. Can the Absolute, All-pervading Deity (Atma), have direct personal intercourse with the microscopic consciousness of an individual man? asks the psychologist, and he answers rightly in the negative. To explain, therefore, such experiences as those of F. B. (or of Joan of Arc or others), where a definite Voice gives definite directions, the modern psychologist takes refuge in the unconscious realms of the man's own nature—his sub- or superconscious,—ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμιν. How does that explain the following? One of Mr. Begbie's converts writes of himself: "At last, sure that this feeling was true, and absolutely wretched about myself, I got hold of F. B.'s address and went off to see him. He was out. I wanted to see him so badly that I sat down at the table in his room and began writing him a letter. All of a sudden he bounced into the room, breathlessly. 'I knew there was someone needing me,' he said. It turned out that he was on his way to see somebody else when he felt himself stopped dead in the street and ordered to go to his room. The other appointment was important, so he had run all the way back" (p. 78).

To limit this experience to some intuitive perception of F. B.'s unconscious, working in touch with another man's unconscious, and impressing itself successfully at the psychological moment on F. B.'s busy and normal waking consciousness, is to reconstruct human nature on startling lines, and to create innumerable difficulties. The reason assigned for F. B.'s ability to be aware in these ways, is that he has completely surrendered his will to the Divine will, and that his whole life is given in unhesitating and unqualified obedience to that will. The Deity—God's will—is conceived, not in personal terms, mediated to the finite and personal consciousness of the man F. B., but in Cosmic and Universal terms, as the general and pervasive *Élan Vital*, or Spirit. The hierarchical structure of the Universe is ignored. The Voice that F. B. hears cannot be the Voice of the Deity, we are told; therefore it must be a voice in his own head,—an echo of his own superconscious *alter ego*.

Thus we see the psychologist, striving to avoid a crude anthropomorphism, and to keep the conception of Deity universal, nevertheless failing to accomplish his end, since he does not include intelligence and limitation, with

will, in his attributions. God must be infinitely great, but also infinitely little; He must be at once impersonal and personal. Therefore, as our natures are dual, both higher and lower, not single, we see and interpret correctly when we view the manifestations of Deity in terms of ascending and descending hierarchies or degrees. God may speak to us directly, but it must be in terms of descending manifestation, by means of the Logos, His Word through the Lodge of Masters; through a particular Master; through that Master's representatives. The man who aligns his will completely with the Universal Will, finds his most immediate contact with that Will (since he himself is a finite personality), in the nearest personal Will above his own which is at least an approximate expression of the Divine Will, and to some extent, therefore, at one with it. This personal Will above his own may be that of Christ (to the Christian), if he have reached so high, or of some disciple of Christ (cf. Joan of Arc's heavenly monitors, St. Michael, St. Catharine, St. Margaret),—or even of Christ's "Father"; but it will in the very nature of things be personal, and intensely personal. Mr. Begbie argues in one place for the logical necessity of the survival of the personality beyond the dissolution of the physical vehicle,—why does he not see that one who, while still in the physical, succeeds in opening the doors of his soul to spiritual consciousness, will of necessity come into touch with the souls of "just men made perfect," with those who before him have actually won their immortality, and are perhaps (as they have so often said) striving to reach and assist men on earth? Once surmount the obstacles raised by self-will, pass beyond the mental fogs of a mechanistic and material conception of the life about us, and mystical experience becomes a simple and natural *rapprochement* with the spiritual order of consciousness, and with all those *personalities* which have already attained self-conscious existence in that order. This higher consciousness cannot be less than human consciousness as we know it; but, since there is always an overlapping in the intermediate stages, it must be the realization and fulfilment of what we can already recognize as worthiest and best in the human.

Despite this lack of insight, a lack which is widespread both with scientists and theologians to-day, Mr. Begbie strives to do his friend full justice, and because he does represent him with considerable fairness and detachment, one is able to guess at much which seems to be left unsaid.

Aside, then, from what is this distinct limitation on Mr. Begbie's part, he has written in an introductory chapter a most excellent *rationale* or philosophy of conversion, and, in a concluding chapter, as a result of his view of conversion, he has also written a profoundly interesting and significant essay on immortality. These will bear brief analysis and quotation, but the reader is urged to study the book for himself, especially pages six to nineteen, one hundred and forty-five, and the whole concluding chapter.

F. B.'s postulate, which Mr. Begbie endorses, is that a direct and living consciousness of God is the natural state of things. Sin, which is the will of the creature opposing itself to the will of the Creator, prevents the natural state of things. "Always it is sin, and only it is sin, which blinds the eyes and hardens

the heart of mankind. It may be the smallest of sins, one of those sins which we describe as merely amiable weaknesses; but let it be in charge of a soul and directing its course, let it be a sin which we find ourselves unable to give up, which we recognize as unworthy, and yet cling to, and we are living in the cold, we are moving in the shadows, and all our faculties are in gyves" (p. 6). We might interject here that Mr. Begbie states this all important fact, but does not give the reason, which is that even the smallest sin is part of the lower nature, and while clung to, the man is still identifying his consciousness with lower nature, and so lives in the cold shadows of isolation from Reality—shut out from the radiance of the spiritual life.

Mr. Begbie points out that the divided state of will explains why so many people who profess religious beliefs and devote themselves to religious work, lack power and charm. "Men may live very religiously and yet fail to dislodge their will from some form of selfishness which is fatal to their possession by the grace of God. They may be perfectly pure, and yet vain; or wonderfully generous with their time and money, yet intolerantly wedded to their own ideas; or they may lay down their lives for their religion, and yet never have loved anybody so well as themselves. Perfectly to realize the divine companionship seems to depend solely and exclusively on one act of the will, an act which denies all the values of the animal senses. . . . It is a hard challenge, but there it is; and one must agree that the universe itself is hard. . . . Perhaps the attribution to the Deity of a softness, a vacillation, and a sentimentalism which would be contemptible in a man, has done far more to weaken in humanity the sense of the moral law than the earlier attribution to Him of such miserable bad qualities as jealousy, vindictiveness, and a gross partiality" (p. 7). The struggle is hard for all men of divided will. It is not hard "for those whose souls are doped by the swill in the trough of animalism" (p. 8), — and, we might add, thorough worldliness is often a more complete "dope" even than animalism. Nor is it hard for the man whose will is united to the Divine Will.

In the history of mankind, ascent is the consequence of desire. "The greatest of all human words, because it denotes the greatest of human powers, is the word love—a word which signifies desire at its highest intensity. What a man loves with all his will he finds it easy to obtain; the struggle entailed in getting what we want can be measured, and is absolutely determined, by the quality of our desire. . . . To hunger and thirst after a virtue rightly commands that virtue; half-heartedly to wish for a virtue rightly brings only a fragment of that virtue into our possession. To obtain a living and creating consciousness of the divine companionship our will must desire that blessing to the extremest intensity of love, certainly to the exclusion of our own petty wishes (p. 9). . . . Love of God—the will conformed to the will of God, the heart hungering and thirsting after God, the affections of the mind set upon the things of God—this is sufficient to deliver the soul from its sins: and this is the heart and centre of the Galilean revelation (p. 18). . . . The question asked of man by the universe is not 'What do you believe?' but 'What do you love?' Any man who

makes honest answer to that simple question can determine his own value to the universe, his exact place in the stages of evolution" (p. 19).

The bare outline is here given, but the quotations, it is hoped, make the principles clear. A man gets what he really wants—what he desires. As long as his desires (the wills of his higher and lower natures) are divided and opposed even to the smallest degree, he stultifies himself, and sooner or later evolution passes over him and degeneration sets in. So *Light on the Path* says, "The whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who enters the way," and another Master said long ago that *love* of God and of one's neighbour is the summation and fulfilment of the law, and that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

In the concluding chapter on "Immortality," with concise and often brilliantly worded paragraphs, Mr. Begbie surveys man's ascent through a million years—ascent won by hard labour, by intelligent action, but above all by innumerable choices of the higher over the lower Life itself, and environment, impelled him to this; but, "'The higher organisms gradually substitute internal for external stimuli.' *Know thyself* was a great utterance; *The Kingdom of Heaven is within you* was a greater revelation of truth" (p. 152) With the moral freedom of man, "Evolution brings *personality* into existence . . .; what reason have we to think that it has now switched off its vitalizing current of creation? . . . Science seems to teach that life never ceases to be, but will not yet admit that *personality* persists after the collapse of the physical instrument. But this is a progress towards nothing, a race with no goal but the starting-point, an ascent, the topmost peak of which is the bottomless abyss of beginning" (pp. 153–4).

Mr. Begbie then points out that it is the testimony of all evolution in man, whether of things terrestrial or in great spiritual experience, that "a subordination of their lower nature establishes for them a new relationship with reality —a relationship so pervasive in its effects that they liken it to a new birth (p. 154). . . . Just as science must control animal senses by reason, in order to arrive at physical reality, so, we are told by religion, man must control those same senses if he is to arrive at spiritual reality. And just as science teaches us that all progress in evolution has depended on the establishment of a new relationship with the actualities of environment, so religion tells us that spiritual progress depends on the establishment of a new relationship with the ultimate reality of the universe. The religious man, it would seem, carries the work of physical science to a logical conclusion (pp. 155–6). . . . Does it not seem a natural inference from the theory of evolution that a race which rises above the stagnations of animalism, and which produces individuals who live spiritual lives, is capable of attaining to a spiritual consummation? Why this freedom of man's soul? Why this infinite labour of evolution? . . . The natural reward of the man who desires spiritual satisfactions (in religious language, *who loves God*) is the opportunity to enjoy those satisfactions. The natural punishment of the man who desires animal satisfactions (in religious language, *who denies God*) is the death of his soul—that part of him which can

only be satisfied by spiritual growth, that immortal part of him which hunger and thirst after righteousness might have rendered immortal. Such a theory of rewards and punishments not only furnishes the mind with an honourable idea of the Creator's justice, but provides the evolutionary hypothesis with a completing purpose worthy of its travail" (p. 157).

These are truly memorable words, and would carry with them the unqualified endorsement of any student of Theosophy. Love is the one thing in the world that cannot be forced, though it can be cultivated; and when man turns in love to God, he becomes, as the heir of all the ages, one "who grows into the likeness of the thing he loves, who becomes immortal because with all his heart, and with all his mind, and with all his strength he hungers and thirsts after the things of immortality" (p. 158). "Such a thesis of existence gives a new dignity to religion," adds Mr. Begbie, and we say heartily amen, because his thesis of existence is Theosophy, a statement of that Wisdom of God which is age-old, which has lain behind the myths and precepts and traditions of all religions, and which is at once the goal of all our knowledge and the aspiration of our souls to-day.

Conversion, then, occurs when a man realizes that "any form of wilfulness in the mind is a vital bar to a vital consciousness of God," and that "as soon as the mind, with real honesty and a consuming desire for that divine consciousness, hates its sin and turns to God, the will is new born" (p. 161). Life in such a man becomes transfigured; he is joyous because freed from the weakness and irresolution of a divided personality, he has a new sense of his relation to the spiritual order, and he finds, liberated within him, creative power which not only transforms him, but reaches out to, and lifts up, the lives of his fellow men. Immortality is conditional upon conversion; therefore conversion is something to be ardently desired and to be won at any cost; and this process, with its goal, alone explains the purpose of existence.

F. F.

A grain thrown into good ground brings forth fruit, and a principle thrown into a good mind brings forth fruit.—PASCAL.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Convention of The Theosophical Society had stirred the Historian deeply. "I wish the impossible," he lamented. "I wish the Convention could have re-assembled after an interlude sufficient to give us an opportunity to think over what had been said. There was so much 'in the air,' or 'between the lines,' which only meditation could bring through into consciousness. At the end of a week I was positively oppressed with a speech I wanted to make,—an exhortation if you prefer, addressed to myself primarily, but to which others might have responded."

"What was it?" we asked.

"The dominant theme of the Convention, in my opinion, was the effect of the theosophic ideal on contemporary civilization. That ideal—the ideal of chelaship, of 'the superior man' as Confucius expressed it—the ideal of absolute self-mastery and of conscious co-operation with the Lodge of Saviours and Adepts—that great ideal, having been brought down to us 'from above' through the sacrifice of Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge and others, met at last with the response which gave it physical life on this plane: that is to say, with the response of love, desire, and *action*. It became embodied. Since then, the daily efforts of hundreds of men and women have sustained that response, ceaselessly reaffirming it, reinforcing it, lifting it constantly a little nearer to its source in the Lodge, nourishing it, as the gods are nourished,—by sacrifice. That ideal, therefore, has become an enormous though imperceptible power in the world where it is now rooted, and just as purity consumes and destroys impurity, so this ideal of chelaship, of spiritual knighthood, is disintegrating and destroying the material and unreal idols of the world,—the idol of comfort, the idol of physical sensation, the idol of commercial supremacy, the idol of universal suffrage, the idols of self-will, self-indulgence, of self-exaltation, and a score of others. Most of them it will take ages to destroy, though all will go in time, under the creative, preservative, and *therefore* disintegrating influence of the theosophical ideal-made-real. One or two are putrefying already, and we can see to-day on the surface of the world the seething, fermentative, hideous stir of their decay. Chief among these is the idol of government by the mob, for the mob,—an idol made in Birmingham, though Celts have been the chief among its priests. Carrion-Jews are feeding on it, sometimes cawing 'Sovietism' and sometimes cawing 'Reform.'

"Often I wonder if members of the Society realize their responsibility. To see the light in any degree is to become responsible to that extent. It was an Avatar who said, 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke (excuse) for their sin.' The revelation of the Lodge was made; the *call* of the Lodge went forth, and all of nature echoed it. To-day it rings in our ears, more clearly, perhaps, than ever before—heart-

ravishing, magical, and yet stern as the call of God's Warriors must be. We shall indeed be without covering for our sin if we fail to do more than admire."

The Historian rose and gazed intently before him.

"There were souls about to be re-born. They knew that they had seen, and that they had failed, not once but often. Vanity or ambition or lust or sloth had swamped them. They had been cruel to those they loved, unfaithful to those who had trusted them,—they had turned from the inner light. So, with vision momentarily cleared (the soul indrawing before its return to earth), these souls prayed from the depths of them for *one more chance*. Their prayer was heard. Their Master gave from himself—as the pelican gives—to balance their Karma, that the chance they begged might be granted. Those souls to-day are members of this Society. Some struggle royally, breasting the waves with eyes fixed on their goal. Others . . . Yet surely it cannot be that anyone now would betray him! For 'thirty pieces of silver'—for the yet cheaper admiration of the world, for some brief sensation, or from sheer inertia—could any fail to throw their hearts ahead of them, and then follow after?"

The Student was tired. "Thank you," he said. "You have done me good. I feel at times as if I were driving a lame pig to market!"

"Who made the pig and who made it lame? You did. What do you expect? A race-horse to carry you there!"

The words ripped out like shots from a revolver. The Sphinx, usually so silent and benign during his rare visits, hits out invariably at the least suggestion of what he calls "negativeness."

The Student pulled himself together. "You're right," he said. "I suppose I'm growing flabby in my old age!" (he is far from old). "You remind me of a story told of Damodar. Do you remember it? He was very young and very frail. He and Olcott used to bathe together in some small river near Madras. Damodar could not swim and was a terrible coward in the water, shivering if it came up to his knees. H. P. B. and Olcott teased him unmercifully, but without result. Finally Olcott said to him: 'Fie! A pretty adept you will make when you dare not even wet your knee.' Damodar said nothing at the time, but the next day when they went bathing, he plunged in and swam across the stream, having decided that he would swim or die. No wonder that he succeeded where hundreds of others failed! The Historian, quoting, spoke of the worship of the mob. I am afraid that some of us are afflicted with a worship of obstacles. I know one or two people, in any case, who brood over them most industriously, and, in spite of my exclamation, I sincerely despise that. Obstacles so obviously are like the steps of a stair,—there to be used, to be mounted, as our only means of ascent."

"Speaking of mob-worship," interjected the Philosopher, "what do you think of England? The British workman seems to have worshipped himself with such intensity and for so long, that he has at last drawn all other classes —with a few individual exceptions—into the current. They appear to unite in adulation of the so-called workman, merely because he does not even

pretend to be a gentleman. In this country, where the mob is so firmly in the saddle, and where everyone is so familiar with the horrible result, the English worship of inferiority is comparatively unknown. Hatred of superiority is of course common to both countries; but in England, a candidate for office seems to be admired, even by educated people, solely on the ground that his mother was a washerwoman. A candidate for the Presidency of the United States will make immense capital out of the fact that he started life as a newsboy, and will have himself photographed as often as possible with his poor old mother, specially dressed for the occasion in her 'working' clothes. Senators and Secretaries of State will be careful to have their wives photographed while hanging up the family wash in the back yard. But this is done in all cases to show how 'democratic' they are; to show that they wear no 'frills,' and that the mob need not hate them because of their real or imagined superiority. This has nothing to do with the worship of inferiority. The concentrated essence of the oldest and most superior families in the United States would not be tempted, I believe, to grovel at the feet of a man merely because his origin was more humble than *he* is (and they can't be so very humble when any one of them is willing to govern a nation). An English Duchess, on the other hand—at least so far as I can make out—is prepared to hug almost anything in over-alls, from miner to house-painter, indiscriminately. I'm sorry for her, but she will deserve her fate. The Princesse de Lamballe has not been dead for long, and if ever a fact ought to have been stamped indelibly on the human mind it is that superiority is the deadliest of insults, the most unpardonable of outrages, to all but the humble of heart. It is so deadly an insult that it is not admitted, except in theory, by the vast majority of people. God alone is superior, because he's so far away that he doesn't count.

"A queer world! I have no objection whatsoever to a man because his mother was or is a washerwoman, but I cannot for the life of me see why he should be elected to office *because* his mother was a washerwoman. A superior washerwoman is perhaps better than an inferior Duchess,—is certainly better than a vulgar Duchess; but no one can deny that the son of the most superior among washerwomen may be a rogue. In any case I should prefer to elect the mother to office rather than a son who will trade on the poor old woman's working clothes, posing by her side (in the photograph) with his arm affectionately around her, while hoping that the hole in her apron will come out clearly as it will be worth at least ten thousand votes. So 'home-like,' that hole!"

"But don't forget what a perfectly lovely time the British aristocracy are having," the Engineer expostulated, sardonically. "A brand new sensation, —that of being governed by men who might have been their gardeners or footmen: the world upside down. Imagine some typical Lord Percy (his elder brothers killed in the war: how much that means!), discussing 'politics' at the club with his bosom friend, Lord ——, while sipping his third whisky and soda: 'There's no blinking it, my son, we're a perfectly worthless lot, the most hopeless rotters. Why, look at my Dad: the old boy turns up about once a year in the House, and simply drewels. What d'you think is his latest? Wants me

to go to South Africa and *work*,—wants me to grow ostriches! Seems to think an ostrich is some kind of a camel. I went to the Zoo to find out, and bless my soul if the creature isn't a bird—the thing with the feathers, you know. Yes, we're a wretched lot, and I don't wonder we've been kicked out so as to give these other duffers a chance, don't you know. I'm all for them. They can't make things any worse, and it's time they had a show, *I* say. It makes the old boy ripping. He says he's going to rent 53 to some Yankee, and will raise cabbages and pickles and things in Shropshire, till it's all over. Oh Lord!'"

The Engineer can be dramatic when he wants to be, and had acted the part as if he were faint from boredom. Perhaps he thought we needed a change after the Convention! But he was serious beneath the surface.

"They exasperate me," he said. "I could wring their miserable necks. They have such splendid stuff in them, as the war proved; but they're fools and worse until the gun pointed at them goes off under their noses. Nothing less than that will wake them up. Just look at Germany, coolly preparing for her next onslaught, in full sight of everybody, while England opposes whatever move France makes for her own defence, and which France makes, therefore, indirectly, for the protection of England!"

"How do you account for it?" the Recorder ventured.

"Mixed motives as usual," replied the Engineer. "First, jealousy of France—an old jealousy, going back hundreds of years. England does not want France to be too powerful; she wants to keep France and Germany about equally balanced. The Napoleonic wars, and the war of 1870, prove that; also England's warning to Bismarck in 1875 (was it not?), when a too powerful Germany again threatened to attack France. Second among the instincts, or sub-conscious motives, actuating her—for her 'reasons,' as the London *Spectator* exemplifies, are quite irrational—is unadulterated selfishness. England is no longer in danger, because the German fleet no longer exists. That the surrender of the German fleet to England was the result, not of a naval victory, but of the Allied victory on land, for which France was chiefly responsible,—does not touch the spot from which this selfish sense of security originates. Danger to France *alone*, does not worry her.

"England's third motive is in part the perversion of a negative virtue, and in part the lack of a spiritual quality. That spiritual quality is the ability to feel deep and real anger. Very few Englishmen are capable of it. Their anger is ephemeral, superficial, childish. Most of them are so undeveloped in this respect that they would accept the accusation as a compliment: they simply wouldn't understand.

"The other part of it—the perversion of a negative virtue—lies in the fact that England does not bear malice (neither does France; Germany *does*). Not bearing malice; rather despising malice, England prides herself on what she chooses to call her good sportsmanship. If an Englishman has thrashed anyone, or has helped to thrash him, the more soundly the man has been thrashed the more inclined is your Englishman to shake hands with the wreckage—now the 'under dog.'

"This combination of motives, none of which she appears to recognize, has turned England, in effect, into an ally of Germany—Lloyd George and Curzon equally responsible for having led the way."

The Philosopher took up the refrain. "Neither of them is a Pacifist," he said, "but they will have to share with the Pacifists of America, the responsibility for Germany's next war."

"I come first!" interjected the Student. "You may talk about your Pacifists in a minute. I want to finish up with Germany. One of the shorter editorials in the *New York Times*, which appeared on January 2nd, with the sub-title 'Honour Among Generals,' should be re-printed in the 'Screen of Time'—for remembrance. Here it is:

> 'The last volume of the Reminiscences of Field-Marshal Conrad von Hoetzendorff was recently published in Vienna, and has been summarized in "The London Times." It discloses nothing particularly new about the origin of the war, but has a certain significance in the dispatches which passed between military men in Vienna and in Berlin. Both General Conrad and General Moltke were nervous about their respective Foreign Ministers and monarchs. Both officers felt that war was inevitable, and at least Conrad strongly desired it; but they were fearful that it would not be got going under the most favorable conditions from their common point of view.
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> 'Among the telegrams and letters which were interchanged by Moltke and Conrad none are more significant than those which related to the attitude of Italy. The German Chief of Staff continually urged the Austrian to make "an honest arrangement" with Italy. By this he meant to buy her off with promises of territory in the Trentino. The idea appealed to General Conrad who, in discussing it, remarked that "after a successful war one perfidy could be repaid by another and the Trentino could be retaken from the blackmailers." Possibly the Italians were not so dull as not to guess what was intended! This may account for their coldness to the Austrian advances, then and later.
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> 'As for General Moltke, he had no scruples about the scheme to entrap Italy. To the Austrian representative at German headquarters he gave the advice to pay the necessary price to Italy. He added the comment: "Once the war with Russia is finished, you can always challenge Italy, and Germany will stand by you."
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> 'After the war had actually got under way, Moltke sent a cordial letter to his brother in arms, General Conrad. It began with the admission: "Our proceedings in Belgium are certainly brutal, but it is a question of life or death, and who gets into our way has to bear the consequences."'

"The ease with which people forget, leaves me gasping," continued the Student. "No wonder that it takes several million years of evolution to learn that stealing and a few other things are wrong, when such an experience as

that of the great war, with its renewed revelation of the German national character, has not left so much as a dent in the Christian Science attitude of England and America. No one dares to say 'forgive,' when there has not been even a pretence of repentance; but while England denies in effect that Germany is the same Germany, there are multitudes in America who are denying other facts which the war and the peace have made as clear as daylight, and who, to cap the climax, are asserting that war is incompatible with righteousness."

The Student waived to the Philosopher that his turn had come. "I'm not so sure that righteousness concerns them," the Philosopher responded. "In any case, their favourite term is 'un-Christian.' You spoke of 'multitudes,' however. I speak of the highly paid Secretaries of the Y. M. C. A., who, backed by rich Presbyterians, are doing their utmost to de-nationalize the youth of the country. They have inaugurated a 'National American Youth Movement' At a Convention of the International Student Volunteer Movement held recently at Indianapolis (the 'Youth' Movement being a part of it), Dr. Eddy, Associate General Secretary of the International Committee of the Y. M. C. A., delivered a pronunciamento on the condition of the world in general, on the evils of 'the old social order,' and particularly on the iniquity of the Ruhr occupation by France. Dr. Eddy was followed by Dr. Robert E. Speer, President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, who spoke more cautiously but with the same intent. A day or two later, at the same Convention, the real purpose of this Y. M. C. A. propaganda was allowed to appear. A statement was submitted declaring 'that war is un-Christian.' Of the 7400 delegates said to have been present, it was reported that some 6000 approved this principle.

"The Y. M. C. A. is a pacifist organization. For that reason, it is anti-Christian and anarchical. To declare that war should not be waged against burglars and murderers and blackmailers, merely because they act nationally instead of as individuals, is more corrupting and more sinful in many cases than to be guilty of those crimes, because those who make these declarations are better educated for the most part than the so-called criminal class, and ought, therefore, to be more responsible."

"Meanwhile," asked our Visitor, "how about France? Look at the way she has repudiated Poincaré!"

The Historian undertook to answer. "Don't you think," he said, "that a nation should be judged as we judge an individual? Even a good man has his lower moments. Men of genius have been known to behave outrageously. Further, just as an individual is often 'a house divided against itself'—until a stage of evolution has been reached, far beyond the stage as yet attained by any nation—so a nation should be considered in terms of its nobility on the one hand and of its mob on the other hand. Clearly, the English mob, the French mob, the German mob, have totally different characteristics. All of them are hateful, but in different ways. Similarly, if we were to think of officers in the army as representative of the official aristocracy

or nobility of a nation, we should see an even greater difference between the 'nobilities' of England, France, and Germany. Think of the difference between the army officers of these nations as they revealed themselves during the war!

"All the older nations, therefore, if we would understand them, must be thought of as we think of individuals; and the way to think of an individual is to see him in terms of his interior conflict—the struggle between his 'nobility' and his 'mob.' Sometimes, as in the case of Germany, a man's 'nobility' is only a psychic counterfeit, as when a drunkard, in his sober moments, preaches the Gospel until he becomes inebriated by his own emotions. In France, however, there is a real nobility. Democracy has placed it at the mercy of the mob, and sometimes the mob follows, and sometimes it rebels. We must judge by tendencies; by the continuing standards to which the individual or the nation reverts. The mere fact that you can exclaim, 'What has happened to France!' is proof in itself that she has departed from her normal course,—for who would ever dream of asking, 'What has happened to Germany?' merely because Germany had misbehaved!"

The Sphinx had listened attentively. Now he spoke. "France," he said, "France—or, more properly, the French people, have forsaken their first love; have departed from *their* truth. They no longer seek guidance from above, through a King by God's appointment; they seek guidance from below, from their own desires. Someday they will return to their love of earlier days; they must, to fulfil themselves. Then will those come back to them from the past—servants of the Great King—who in the past have led them, so often to victory, and who will come to them again to serve, to lead, to conquer, when the Great King wills it so—though he will not permit this, or any perfect victory, so long as they follow the glamour of their false ideal.

"Much has been said in the QUARTERLY in favour of France, pa ticularly during the great war, when her cause was the cause of all humanity; but to suppose that France is perfect or impeccable would be absurd. Her history shows how woefully she can sin To-day, in a certain sense, there is more of the spirit of France in her soil than there is in her people,—her soil is alive with the blood of sacrifice. Have you not felt there the love of the Great King, blessing the seed of the future? Yet France has a bitter path to tread before she can undo her past and win to the heights which a divine hope reserves for her."

"If I may revert to the Historian's last suggestion," said the Student, "I should like to ask if you would say of England, 'What has happened to her?' in the sense which he gave to the same question about France."

"Yes, I should feel that about England," the Sphinx replied. "She has departed from her normal course. She has not been showing herself at her best, but at her worst. It would be a mistake, however, not to see beneath what the Historian described as the seething, fermentative process of decay, a new life emerging. There are indications of it in many quarters. Quite small movements, among quite ordinary people—such as the spread of 'Toc. H.' and its purposes—are indicative of what is taking place in England's soul, proving

conclusively that the theosophical ideal has been at work, creating, preserving, disintegrating, and, as it disintegrates, throwing up to the surface the greatest possible contrasts to itself—as fever may denote the successful effort of nature to consume and expe some hidden elements of disease. Those who love England must grieve for her to-day; for she is not herself. Yet we must hope, for are not Masters the great physicians—the obstetricians of nations as of souls! They are not omnipotent, but they can take your sacrifice and prayer, and can multiply these until the whole world rings with them.

"You are very modern people from my standpoint," he added, laugh ng. "Some of you know, from observation, that radio-amplification, to an almost unlimited extent, is a fact Was it not suggested, at a meeting of the New York Branch, that this is merely a reflection, on lower planes, of an eternal spiritual law?"

Then we adjourned. A day or two afterwards the Recorder received the following note from Cavé:

"The world reels madly on, drunk with its own emotions. To-day is its Mardi Gras,—before its Lent begins! It has fed itself on poisoned lies, any one of which spells death; yet, though the poison be slow, its work is none the less sure, and grows swifter towards the end. Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad, and there is much that the gods would destroy to-day—practically all of that which calls itself 'modern,' in arrogant boastfulness; and what the gods would destroy *is* destroyed, whatever the world may say or do about it.

"Calmly can we afford to wait, therefore, since, rooted in Truth, the 'eternal years of God' belong to us; and, in the end, all these piteous masquerades and criminal insanities will be forced to work together for the fulfilling of the purposes of the Great Law. The Great Law! not one jot or tittle of which but shall be fulfilled. There is a thought to ease and quiet our hearts, no matter how giddy the outer pace.

* * * * * * *

"I was reading the other day of the claim to the recent discovery of this deadly radio force. It seemed to bear such analogy with our work, our real work as disciples in the world. Passing through the crowded streets, the concentrated, purified force of a disciple will automatically disintegrate the evil in the hearts and minds of those he passes, as it will vivify every tendency for good. To exercise such beneficence is surely the *real* service of humanity; of which so-called 'humanitarian' work is the present ghastly travesty. This service we are able increasingly to render as we 'become.' So may we truly accomplish Masters' work in the world, unknown to that world,—most often unknown to ourselves, yet none the less effective. One disciple, meditating in the retirement of his room, transforming the atmosphere of a great city! Let us wait then calmly, but let us also labour ceaselessly to make of ourselves such servants and instruments of the Lodge."

The Recorder is most grateful to Cave for this Conclusion to our talk.

T.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

April 10th, 1911.

DEAR ———

I have your letter of the 9th, which I answer at once, as I do not know how soon you may wish to use the information.

I do know of people who have found the middle of the night the only possible time in which to get a clear half hour for meditation, and for many reasons it is a very good time. The objections to it are twofold; first, the practical one of loss of sleep in case they cannot go to sleep as soon as they are through; second, the fact that it is at night, when we are asleep, that our inner bodies, our souls, get that refreshment and rest without which life would not be bearable. This refreshment, however, comes during the hours of deepest sleep, say between the hours of midnight and four A.M., and if you do not wake until after four I do not think this objection serious. In other words, on the whole I think the very early morning hours a good time for this purpose. But we must use common sense about it as about everything else.

The difference between our possibilities and our achievement is a mortification, almost an absurdity, with all of us. But this is not a healthy thought. Dismiss it, if for no other reason than that you have no idea of what your achievement really is. You do not know what veils you have worn thin, and which may break away entirely at any minute; you do not know what old adhesions you have broken down, leaving your spirit free. You really do not know anything about your real inner condition at all, and you do know that your outer condition is no index whatever of the inner state. "Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously," etc. Bother about our progress and our condition is, after all, only a form of egotism. We have enough to absorb all our energies if we attend to the work we have to do, and to the duties of each moment, which is the way the Master is training us and the medium through which he trains us. The results do not matter. This may sound unsympathetic, but I do not mean it so. We all have to learn, and we, none of us, yet have learned, not to bother about results whether in connection with ourselves or some other thing or person or event. It is simply one of the necessary steps we all come up against and stay in front of until we mount them. . . .

I would not go further with your friend than to tell her that she will find in the T. S. the heart doctrine she craves, and which she did not and will not find in any other organization; and you can add that the T. S. is the gateway to inner bodies to which no one is eligible until he is a member of the T. S. I think, by the way, that the great difference between our organization and the Adyar Society is in just this connection. We try to live the life, they try to learn about it; and in consequence really devotional people feel them to be barren, as indeed they are. Give her several copies of the QUARTERLY and tell her to read it with

the object of discovering the spirit which underlies it and the Society which produces it. If she is incapable of finding that spirit there, our organization will not appeal to her. . . .

Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

May 20th, 1911.

DEAR ———

Your last letter, written on the 20th April, did not ask any questions. Indeed I think you must be beginning to realize, more and more, that these things in which we are interested are not matters of the mind at all. The good we get out of meetings is from the exchange of our power and light with the power and light of each other person. That is why anything in the nature of disharmony is so fatal to any advance along the Path. Naturally this is a general reflection and is not directed towards you in any way whatever. It is, however, a point that we must keep in mind for we are all very human, and it is very human to criticize others mentally, even when we never allow it any expression; and mental criticism is just as harmful as if spoken. Indeed it is often worse, for it festers if kept bottled up within.

We all need the same things; we all need what the old books call a "steadier walk." We must go along smoothly, not by jerks and swings. We must conquer the tendency to have periods of inspiration when we feel that we can do anything, and periods of dryness when we lack any kind of power at all. This vibratory existence must be stopped; this oscillation of consciousness makes any kind of definite union with the divine side of things entirely impossible. We must find power somewhere, somehow, to keep us always up to the mark. This is hard and is where we all fail, but we must learn to do it. I know of no royal road; it is just a question of pegging away, faithfully, doggedly, doing those things which we know we ought to do with such cheerfulness as we can muster. It all makes for progress; and some fine day, perhaps when we least expect it, we shall find that our efforts have finally worn the veil so thin that the least additional effort tears a big rent in it. That is the moment we must work for and long for.

I shall be glad to hear from you.

Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

June 29th, 1911.

DEAR ———

There is some work on the QUARTERLY which you can do for me. You can write a 3000-word article on "Why I joined the T. S."; and the best yoga practice I can recommend, is that you shall at once repress *all* the objections and obstacles to doing the article, and quite simply go ahead and write it. When finished send it to me. . . .

Your faults are mainly due to lack of self-confidence, as I have said before. It is not often that we have to encourage a student in such a direction. You lack faith in yourself, in your personality as well as in your soul; your attitude towards life is too deprecatory. Your existence requires no excuse, and your abilities are above the common. Use them, and be yourself in a more positive and virile manner. This can be done (must be done) without self-assertiveness (which is most objectionable), and without vanity (which is foolish).

Is this what you want?

With kindest regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. Griscom, Jr.

October 28th, 1911.

Dear ———

I very much appreciate your letter of yesterday, and we shall all be most happy to help you with the work of —— if you get stalled.

I am glad to hear of the outcome of the business move. The next step is to do these things without perturbation and nervousness. They mar the excellence of our endeavours.

With kindest regards,

I am sincerely,

C. A. Griscom, Jr.

January 2nd, 1912.

Dear ———

I have read the records, which I return to you, with interest and appreciation. There appears to be a week missing.

You should draw up a Rule of Life. I enclose a paper which, while not meant for just your case, contains hints that will be helpful. I shall be glad to discuss the matter with you. I told you to do this a year ago, but apparently you did not understand; although you have been actually living a kind of Rule, as witness your hourly and finally your quarter-hourly meditations or moments of recollection. In due time you can compare your Rule with those of others and get ideas from them, but do not try to live according to another's Rule unless direction to do so is given you.

There is much misdirected energy in your case. Perhaps the chief criticism that I can make is that you are looking for some big thing to do with or about yourself—forgetting that saintliness has been well described as "perfection in the doing of little things." It is the minutiæ of life, and the way they are attended to, that differentiates the disciple from the ordinary good man—that and the fundamental underlying reason why he is doing it all,—love of, and desire to serve the Master. There is nothing, not a detail of your life, which is not a concern of the —— to which you aspire. You want something definite to work on; take your clothes. Surely they can be made closer to the ideal. It is through apparently trivial matters, and not by direct attack,

that we get at such a thing as self-will. You will be surprised to discover how much self-will is mixed up in your thought, or lack of thought, about clothes.

Your use of slang or colloquialisms, especially in writing, is another, even smaller point, but important, nevertheless. You should never write the most trifling note which you would be ashamed to have submitted to a committee of Lodge members, who were to pass upon your qualifications as a disciple. That is the ideal to strive for. The Master wants his disciples to be perfect in *every* particular—to be finished men and women of the world.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

January 3rd, 1912.

DEAR ———

Your letter of January first made me very happy, for the two ways in which we can be made happy are by the realization that we have been of service to the Master and of service to our fellow disciples. These are the two real and abiding joys of life.

Last night I prayed to him for a gift for you, because of the happiness you had given me, and the impression I received was to try and make you realize his love for you.

Take your love for your mother, for ——, for anyone and everyone: unite all these feelings in one great whole, keeping it intimate, personal, familiar: then multiply it a thousand fold, and you will begin to know something of his feeling for you.

Use your imagination freely in trying to realize it: take up the different elements of an ideal love, one by one, and try to feel each in turn;—the yearning, the tenderness, the passion, the depth, the sympathy, the complete understanding of every nook and cranny of your heart, the desire to reach you and pour out love upon you,—everything you can think of. Go over them, one by one, and feel them, and then make a deliberate effort to open yourself to the sum total of it all: let it flood your whole being.

This is the path to the Master, and you can travel it as fast as you will.

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

January 7th, 1912.

DEAR ———

Hereafter, please make a regular practice of writing down a four or five line description of your day, and particularly of your interior condition, and the excellence or otherwise of your daily meditations and prayers; and at the end of each week send it to me.

You will find this a helpful practice, as it is a necessary one.

With the best of good wishes,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

January 17th, 1912.

DEAR ———

Many thanks for your weekly Ledger. It is very good for a beginning. A friend suggested the following:

"This student is afraid to use imagination freely—the barrier being mental, therefore; and is absurdly looking for results."

Never allow yourself to feel discouraged for a second. It is foolish as well as wrong!

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

February 4th, 1912.

DEAR ———

I congratulate you on the typewriter, and the excellence of your work on it.

There is no earthly or heavenly reason why you should not talk to us about your inner life. The ability to do so is one of the things you must acquire. Just do it. Like everything else it is much easier in the doing than in the anticipation.

I return last week's ledger; it shows improvement. "The Master that thou feelest but as yet thou canst not see." Try to *feel* him. Try prayer instead of meditation. Talk to the Master, and try to hear him reply, keeping still, mentally as well as physically, in order to listen.

Referring to your outer effort and the disappointment you record: it was probably designed to rouse your courage and determination. The fault probably was in looking for results. If you had not had your mind on *results*, you would not have been disappointed and suffered the reaction because nothing (apparently) came of it.

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

February 15th, 1912.

DEAR ———

I am much obliged to you for the review you wrote. I have not made up my mind whether to print it or not. I am also grateful for the work on the article. I do think we should have some simple articles for simple folks.

I return your ledger. It is rather meagre. Did you get no ideas or help from the comments on the last one? You speak of not understanding the lesson of the previous week. Did the comments help you to an understanding?

With kindest regards,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

July 25th, 1912.

DEAR ———

I return the last two installments, without further comment than to say that you are learning and growing, and that I am proud of you.

You really understand things and work things out very soundly with your head. Do not forget, however, that we *feel* our way into Heaven. The road to the Master is through love, and we often learn to love him through love of others. Afterwards, we love all others by means of his love for us, and ours for him.

I am hoping for time between now and Saturday morning to get at the QUARTERLY material that is ready, but there may not be time—if not I will write. These be strenuous days.

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

P.S. I forgot to give you our address in Switzerland—and to say that I shall expect you to send your reports and a letter there regularly, weekly.

October 13th, 1912.

DEAR ——

I return herewith the accumulated "Ledgers," for which many thanks. I often wonder why you trust me with such things. I marvel at my own assurance in receiving them, and I occasionally grow cold with a sense of complete inadequacy. All of which shows you that I am still under the influence of my "cold," or I would not write in such a way,—which is deplorable, for we should be above such little things.

If you are not ready for your meditation, why not spend ten minutes getting ready? All religions teach the need of preparation before going into the Master's presence.

Dead days come from the heart. The head goes on as usual, and sees no difference, but the heart is not functioning properly.

This failure in meditation was caused by lack of co-ordination between head and heart. Your heart felt the meditation, but the influence did not reach and affect your head. The whole of spiritual progress is made up of failing and beginning over again. We grow by a succession of failures, not a succession of victories. Personally I believe in going at the root of the matter in meditation and trying to *control* the mind, rather than to *amuse* it. But people vary.

There is nothing the Master likes better than for us to have a good time—provided that it is innocent.

I am afraid you are not growing as the flower grows—unconsciously, yet eagerly anxious. I find too much introspection in this Ledger, and yet I do not want you to feel that this is inconsistent with my request for a full report. If you received such a report from someone whom you were detailed to help, what would you tell him? What would you advise? You are trying too much with the head and not enough with the heart. Feel more, let yourself go more in love. Can you pray until you weep? You need to be loosened up. To become more conscious, you want to keep more in mind the Master's love; try to feel it. Think of it every hour as the clock strikes. You are making a new

start in the right direction. Keep it up, and do not let that self-depreciatory attitude undermine your confidence and faith.

Bid your friend keep her desire to help people. That desire in itself is a force which will make possible the giving of many blessings to them which they otherwise might not be enabled to receive. That is the major part of a woman's work in the world—to bring down love and blessings on others through her love, her desire, her prayers—the better if no one else suspects; then it is a secret between herself and God. Remind her that the self that loves the Master *is herself*, which is another way of saying that she loves the Master devotedly, only its perception is veiled somewhat to her understanding. Let her assert and live by the fact, and its realization will come quickly.

Progress toward the Master means, in part, realizing that a part of you is already within him; and as soon as you identify yourself with "that portion of yourself which you have with pain created for your own experience"—the Path is entered in reality, and you become a disciple.

"Particular love": the solution of this problem is found when you realize that you love others with a part of your love for the Master, and his love for you. All the power of loving we have, we get from him.

The Master sometimes asks us to do things which we think will be difficult and disagreeable, but when we go ahead, quite simply, and do them, they always turn out to be something we are very glad about. Why not let the Master share in our happiness? He is glad to do so, if we will let him. He will get great happiness and satisfaction out of *our* happiness and satisfaction from music, flowers, beautiful scenery, love of friends, what not,—if we will share it with him. You can test the propriety of your happiness by seeing if you are willing to share it with him, to tell him about it.

You must keep on the higher plane, so as to starve out the lower. Every time you go back and live in it, as you do thousands of times each day, you feed it and give it a new lease of life. You try too much to explain all these things of the inner life to and with your mind, and you accept the barriers of your mind, as *your* barriers. They are not.

Too much mental gymnastics! You are mistaken in thinking that, in any real sense, one *glance* at a speaker would mean more to you than hours of listening. It might satisfy your mind more, though even that is doubtful. No one was ever satisfied by "tests." The more they get the more they want. The only faithful members of old times in the T. S. to-day, are those for whom H. P. B. did *not* perform phenomena. You already have the inner faculty which corresponds to the glance of the eye, but you, at times, and your mind always, refuse to realize and recognize it.

You must be a thing before you can understand it. In this case, you are told to do something which you will not understand until, to some extent, you have done it. Knowledge and understanding will come from action.

With kindest regards,

I am, Sincerely yours,

C. A. Griscom, Jr.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Morning Session

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday, April 26th, 1924, at 64 Washington Mews, New York, by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston. Temporary organization was effected by the election of Mr. Johnston as Temporary Chairman of the Convention, and Miss Julia Chickering as Temporary Secretary. The first business of the Convention being to determine what Branches of the Society were duly represented, either by delegates or proxies,—it was moved and seconded that the Chair appoint a Committee on Credentials, with instructions to report as soon as practicable. The Committee appointed was: Professor Henry Bedinger Mitchell, Treasurer T. S.; Miss Isabel E. Perkins, Secretary T. S.; Miss Martha E. Youngs, Assistant Treasurer.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

Mr. Johnston: While the Committee on Credentials is at its work, it is my great privilege and happy duty, to bid you all welcome to the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society. A year ago, something was said about our fifty-year cycle, the great importance that would attach to it, and how we might make our response to that cyclic period really effective. The same principle is vital to-day, but I wish to speak of it from a different direction. First of all, let us not consider, with mathematical accuracy and anxiety, just when the old cycle ends, just when the new cycle begins. Let us say that we will hold that spirit which shall begin the new cycle *now*. A year ago we may have come to the Convention questioning what we might receive, in order that we might understand and forward the purposes of the new cycle. Now let us change our polarity: let us see what we can give. Let us make it the beginning of a cycle of giving, not of receiving. We have the splendid generosity of Masters to set us the example. They have loaded us with gifts, boundless gifts of the bread of life,—not crumbs but armfuls of loaves. It is time for us to show, in return, something of that generosity. First of all, to give ourselves—our hearts, our minds, our souls, our strength; to give in meditation, in thought, in sacrifice, in devotion, in action. Whenever we have spare time, to give that time; whenever we have energy, to give that energy,—a cycle of giving for the Cause of the Masters, for the honour and work of the Lodge. In the World War, we heard the phrase, Give until it hurts. I had rather we should turn that around, and say, Give until it heals; give until it blesses; give until it redeems. Let us make this a new cycle—a cycle of giving our hearts and ourselves.

Report of the Committee on Credentials

Professor Mitchell: Your Committee has examined the credentials presented, and finds that 18 Branches are represented, entitled to cast a total of 90 votes, the votes being

vested in the Branches, and each one entitled to representation proportioned to its membership. The Branches thus represented are:

Altagracia, Altagracia de Orituco, Venezuela
Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia
Blavatsky, Whitley Bay, England
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
Hope, Providence, Rhode Island
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana
Jehoshua, San Fernando de Apure, Venezuela
W. Q. Judge, Gateshead, England
Karma, Kristiania, Norway
Krishna, South Shields, England
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio
Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
New York, New York, N. Y.
Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Virya, Denver, Colorado

It was moved, seconded and voted that the Report of the Committee on Credentials be accepted, and that the Committee be discharged with thanks. The accredited delegates, being now in position to effect permanent organization, nominations for a Permanent Chairman were requested. Professor Mitchell was nominated, elected, and took the Chair.

Address of the Permanent Chairman

The Chairman: My first privilege as Permanent Chairman—a privilege you have made mine for many years past—is to welcome you home again. When we come home, when as brothers we reassemble in our father's house, words may be very few. No one ever really craved an address of greeting, but which of us has not known a homesick hunger for the simple heartfelt welcome of his own kith and kin. It is such a welcome that is mine to voice to-day. No new thing, its value and significance are that, ceaselessly renewed, it is ever the same. It matters not at all what the world has brought you in the intervening year. When you come here all that matters is the will and spirit in your hearts. If these be unchanged, then the welcome is unchanged, for it is the eternal welcome of the Spirit to its own,—the welcome of The Theosophical Society to its members. Thus, though you permit the voice to be mine, the welcome is from something infinitely greater than I; and it is well for us to pause and think from what and whom that welcome really comes, and what it opens to us.

Our thoughts turn first to those whose faces look down upon us from these walls: Madame Blavatsky, Judge, and our other great predecessors and companions of the past. It is their welcome which we feel to-day—were it not so we should be but trespassers in this house of life they built and which for ever must be theirs—and it is to their spirit and their fellowship that their welcome admits us. They place in our hands the harvest of their lives: their wisdom, their love, their aspiration and devotion, their faith and hope and indomitable courage, the living power of their sacrifice,— all that they lived for, all that they died for, all that The Theosophical Society has gained through its forty-nine years of labour, they offer us here to-day. Yet The Theosophical Society is itself but one of the cyclic expressions of the age-old Theosophical Movement,—the movement of the Spirit, descending into the world to seek and reclaim its own, to kindle the souls of men with its primordial fire, to reawaken the sleeping memories of their immortal heritage, to draw them home. It is to that Spirit, incarnate in the Great Lodge of Masters, that The Theosophical Society owes its existence. It is because it has reached and touched us, that we are here; and it is it which welcomes us; it is of it that we are made free. Behind Judge and Madame Blavatsky, and those through whom Theosophy came to us, stand the Masters themselves. Behind and beyond The Theosophical Society is the infinite sweep of the Theosophical Movement. So great a thing, so ancient, so enduring, the hundred year cycle is but a day and night to it. The few score years between man's birth and death shrink to the littleness of atomic space beside it; and yet—it is by human lives alone that it can live and be transmitted. By such dependence of the great upon the small, human life receives dignity and significance, and with them responsibility. In the great waves of the sea, that troop in endless sequence from horizon to horizon, each drop of water moves but a little way, rises and falls in but a narrow orbit, yet by its mo-

tion passes on the mighty rhythm,—by its response enables others to respond, so that the wave sweeps on. If the drops were inert and unresponsive, immobile and fixed, there could be no wave. Throw a stone into a half frozen pond and watch the ripples spread in widening circles till they meet the edge of ice. There the motion ceases or turns back upon itself. But wherever the water is open the wavelets advance. So it is and must be with the Theosophical Movement. It can advance only where it meets hearts which respond, lives which move—in however narrow an orbit—in obedience to its spirit, and which, by their movement, pass that spirit on. It has come to us and touched us,—that is the meaning of our presence here, the reason we are welcomed. Through us, through the response of our hearts and lives, it must be transmitted to the future; or, in us, beating in vain against our inert wills, it must be turned back. The responsibility is ours.

It is a great responsibility, a great opportunity. It must call forth all that is best in us, that we may be true to it, that we may respond in act as well as in feeling, so that our lives may be contagious and not sterile, so that we may gain wisdom with which to guide our course and the course of the Society which is now in our hands. How are we to gain that wisdom?

When we examine the nature of the light by which we see and choose our way, we discover that it is of two different kinds. There is, first, the light of our own minds: our common sense, our reason, our judgment, which we must make sane and sound and true, as best we can. It is our duty to cultivate our intelligence, to learn to see impersonally, and to deal with even the smallest things in accordance with great principles. But at best this light of our own reason is like a lantern which a traveller by night may carry in his hand. So long as the path is clear, the little circle that it sheds around our feet is sufficient to enable us to follow it; but when we come to some forking of the road, or when, having wandered from the way, we need to find it by reference to some more distant landmark, then that little light is not adequate to reveal the heights or vistas which should guide us. No light of our own can show us the heights; it needs God's sunshine or the lightning of His storms. Neither of these is continuous. Day passes and night falls. The flash of lightning, which for a moment illumines all the scene, leaves the darkness darker still, our eyes more blinded. We cannot always see our goal; but, having seen, we can remember. If we take our bearings in the light of day, the lantern of our own minds may show us the compass needle even in the darkest night. The Theosophical Society has known both storm and sunshine. There have been days of clear illumination, in which we could see our goal plainly, and the way to it, and understand the Masters' will for this Movement which they have entrusted to us. There have been other times, times of trial and darkness, when some sharp crisis has lit the scene as by a lightning flash, showing us the same vistas, the same goal and path, and compelling the same understanding. These things are matters of record in the history of the Society, and it is our duty to study that history in order to learn from the past and apply what we learn to the future; that we may store in our minds the map of our path and remember the bearings of our goal.

Mr. Johnston has just reminded us of one of the great lessons our past teaches, and which our welcome here to-day should make vivid and vital to us. It is that our aim must be service; that our only worth lies in what we can give. As we think of those who welcome us, as we look at Mr. Judge's picture and Madame Blavatsky's, and call to mind the men and women who have made the Society what it is—to look no further back than through these forty-nine years—do we revere them, do we rejoice for them, and value their welcome, because they gained something for themselves? because they were rich or comfortable, enjoyed leisure and ease, had acquired learning or fame? We know they did not think of these things. We know that the reason we honour them lies, not in what they took from life, but in what they gave to it. They rank

> "Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth;
> For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice."

Surely, when we come in thought and heart into the presence of the past, when we face our predecessors and think of the Lodge of Masters whom we seek to serve, there must come to

consciousness some question of our right to receive, of our title to admission. It is a question like the challenge of a sentry. Who comes, friend or foe? What is the sign and countersign? What the password? We shall not find it in what we have gained or taken for ourselves. If we look to our virtues and abilities, they pale and fade away. We see that they were gifts to us, and that we bring them back less than we received them. Our comforts, our fulfilled ambitions, personal victories and successes, seem as thefts. Only where we have suffered, where we have endured, where we have sacrificed, where we have given instead of taking, can we find anything to encourage us, for the spirit of the Theosophical Movement is the spirit of service and of sacrifice,—of the life laid down, not kept for self. That only is immortal which is poured forth into the Immortal. We find that immortality here, our past living in the present. It is placed to-day in our hands; but we can take it only as we give to it.

At the conclusion of this address, the Chairman asked that the permanent organization be completed. It was then moved, seconded and carried that a vote of thanks be extended to the Temporary Chairman for his services. Miss Perkins was duly elected Permanent Secretary of the Convention, and Miss Chickering Assistant Secretary. It was also moved, seconded and carried that the Chair appoint the usual standing Committees—the Committee on Nominations; the Committee on Resolutions; the Committee on Letters of Greeting. The reports of the officers of the Society were then called for.

Report of the Executive Committee

Mr. Johnston: Those formal acts which the Executive Committee performs each year, such as the issuing of diplomas and charters, have been duly carried out and recorded by the Secretary of The Theosophical Society. There have been, as the Committee reported a year ago, no visible cyclones, no upheavals, no earthquakes which called for special action by the Executive Committee. This Committee, however, does not exist only to issue diplomas on the one hand, and to deal with cyclones on the other hand. It has the very vital function of continuity. Perhaps one might say that the Executive Committee constitutes the vertebræ of that vertebrate organism, The Theosophical Society, securing continuity: continuity in action, continuity in history and in tradition. Perhaps at the cyclic point which we are approaching, and from which we are advancing, it would be illuminating to call upon the memory of the Executive Committee regarding cyclic points in the past.

We have heard much of the crises of events in years like 1884 and 1885; 1894 and 1895, and so on. Many of us have noted the great opportunities which then seemed to be lost,—opportunities especially of service for the Masters, of service for the world, of spiritual service that might have had a radiant result. We may also have noted the checks which held the Movement back—whether due to faults of self or defects in spiritual power. It is essential for us to understand those checks in order to seek them out in ourselves, and with the aid of the Divine Powers, to remove them. But that is not the side of our history of which I wish to speak. There were superb opportunities which were checked; yet let us regard them as opportunities not lost, but simply delayed. Let us realize that whatever was possible of forward action, of large undertakings, of rich endeavour, in 1885, is possible now—and more possible. The opportunity was not lost then. It was held back for us until now, if we have the valour, the humility, the vision to take it. The same thing is true of 1895, and of 1898. There were vistas visible then, of things luminous and splendid; those opportunities are ours if we have the consecration, the wisdom and the sacrifice to take them now. In that light we would wish to consider, not only the long, eventful, vital history of the Society and the Movement, but also to consider those treasures, those delayed opportunities. Let us resolve that, with the help of the Masters, we shall take them now and fulfil them as the Masters would wish that they should be fulfilled.

Professor Mitchell said something about history—I am going to offer you a quotation from a book that is well known and little understood: "Get wisdom, get understanding. . . . Forsake her not and she shall preserve thee: love her and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal

thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." That is what we need. The great difficulties arose in the past, not so much from lack of zeal, but largely from lack of understanding; and to get understanding is for us not an intellectual obligation, but a moral and a spiritual obligation. So the Executive Committee would have us look back that we may look forward—looking back at past opportunities delayed, only that we may take them now and act.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: In connection with the report of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, I, as a member of that Committee, have been requested to call attention to another aspect of the work of the Society, which it is deemed of importance that you should understand as clearly as may be—that you may draw courage and strength and new vigour from it. It is desired that you should understand what it is that The Theosophical Society is accomplishing now, and shall accomplish in the end, for the whole of the race. The Theosophical ideal is the ideal of chelaship—the ideal of Masters and of human perfectibility, the ideal of service of the great Spiritual Hierarchy. That ideal is not native to the world. It came down from above. It was given to us from the great Lodge of Masters, as it had been offered to the world in century after century through the past,—never arising from the world itself as a worldly thing, for it is foreign to every concept of the world. This ideal was offered to the world through Madame Blavatsky. It was received and accepted, at least intellectually, by some of the early members of the Theosophical Society. To many it remained merely an intellectual ideal; but to others, in the course of time, it became much more than that, and through them, and by their labours, it was passed on, so that a group came into being, in which this ideal lived and grew and kindled will and heart, as well as mind, until it became the single end and purpose of a life. By this means a vehicle was formed, drawn from the world, into which the ideal incarnated. Chelaship, in the world, became a fact. This is the origin and history of The Theosophical Society as a spiritual entity,—the origin and history of the ideal of chelaship and of service of the Masters, coming down from above, meeting a response which provides for it a vehicle from below; so that the result is a complete, incarnate entity.

This incarnated soul must possess the three fundamental aspects of reality—Brahmâ, Vishnu and Shiva. It must be creative. That it is so, we all know. Its ideal is that of a new order. As we incarnate it, that ideal, that new order, comes to birth—at first in a very limited circle, small, as the nucleus of an atom is small; but from the ideal, new life radiates in ever-widening circles. Each one in whom the ideal of Theosophy lives, finds his own life being re-created in accordance with it. Preservative, it draws out from the world all that is in harmony with it, draws from past movements, all that pertains to the spirit. All that is noble and true and good it seeks to cherish, to preserve. Where does the Theosophical Movement not labour to keep all that is of the spirit, all the best of the old? But it is also destructive, disintegrative. It disintegrates all that is opposed to its ideal, all that is of the ideal of the world,—if so be we can apply the word "ideal" to the perverted desires of the world. What *is* the ideal of the world? It is a difficult thing to define; and the more we try, the more we perceive the reason for that difficulty. However definite it may appear, the world's ideal is in reality not definite, but full of contradictions,—trying to move in two opposite ways at once, so that there is no lasting cohesion, no permanent structure. It includes gain for self, but gain to be achieved with as little effort as possible; a maximum of gain for a minimum of effort. It is a commercial ideal. And those two elements, of being willing to sacrifice little or nothing, and of desiring to gain the utmost possible, are inherently self-contradictory; that is its innate weakness. In the midst of that amorphous mass of the world's ideal, there is now this definite, coherent, clear-cut ideal of chelaship, which counts no cost too great, and which has been co-ordinated and solidified by the self-abnegation and devotion of those who have given their lives to further it. As those two ideals come into contact, the ideal of the world is being disintegrated. Where the mob is most worshipped, there this disintegration is most obvious to those who have eyes with which to see it.

The world's ideal: greed, luxury, avarice, ambition. In the *Illustrated London News* of March 15th, 1924, there is an article by Ferrero which is significant in many ways. It speaks of the

nineteenth century, of modern civilization, and points out that it has been founded upon what was known to the old Romans as *ambitio, luxuria, avaritia*—ambition, luxury and avarice. Difficult as it is to define the ideal of the world, does not that come close to it, and is not that the exact opposite of the Theosophical ideal? Are we saying that nothing good has come from the ideal of the world? Nothing from the ideal itself, as grapes do not come from thistles; but from man's blind and ignorant pursuit of it, good has come,—since the great Lodge can use even our departures from the Law to give us training in the Law. Ferrero points out some of this training, as it was pointed out here, and discussed at length more than a year ago, at a meeting of the New York Branch. He says that never before, in his judgment, has there been such a monastic discipline impressed upon the world,—so many men rising and going to business all at the same time; going back home, eating dinner and going to bed, all at the same time, whether they like it or not. Why? Because such conformity is the necessary means whereby their worldly ambitions, their desire for luxury, may be gratified. These spiritual gains which the world will not seek or take for itself, it has been compelled to take by its very adherence to its own desires. The discipline is gain, but it has been accepted only as a means of attaining ends in which discipline has no part.

Nothing can endure that is based upon the search for self, upon taking as much as possible, and giving as little as possible. All this great civilization of ours: its railroads—why else were they built? its vast buildings—why were they constructed except to make money? ninety-nine hundredths of its literature—with what is it concerned but self-gratification? Even if it be scientific literature, it is mostly about ways in which knowledge of nature can be turned to man's personal comfort or aggrandizement. If it be fiction, again it deals with luxury, ambition, avarice. These things must of necessity disintegrate and decay the instant they are brought into contact with anything that is real, like the ideals of the Theosophical Movement. And the good things—the discipline, the accomplishment, the learning—would be swept to destruction with the false, if it were not for the power of a spiritual entity, of the new ideal, to preserve the good as well as to destroy the ill.

I should like, if I could, to give you a picture to carry away with you, of what the Society is doing, what *you* are doing for the world when you bring this ideal into the world and hold it there. I should like you to read in the modern history of the world the effect of the Theosophical Movement. If you can do so, it should give you courage and understanding. You would no longer think of yourselves as few. We *are* few in this room, and how impotent we are as mere men and women!—but what can we not accomplish as the exponents, as the vehicles of a great ideal, of a living, spiritual entity which has life in itself? If you have that vision, you will no longer think of what you are doing as being merely an effort to make yourselves a little less selfish, perverse, foolish, or weak. True, even a little self-conquest is worth great effort, but in itself it is not an inspiring ideal; it does not give us support and courage in our dark moments. It turns us back upon ourselves instead of lifting us above ourselves. But if we think of ourselves as called to be exponents of the Lodge ideal, we should find in that thought both inspiration and power. Thoughts are things, though there is nothing more ineffectual than thought that is left as thought alone. To go into one's own room, where there is no temptation to evil, and to think loving, sweet thoughts, high thoughts, which one makes no attempt to carry out—what could be more futile, more impotent? But a thought that is made an ideal, given a soul by our love and reverence, given power by our act—that is not left to evaporate in the psychic world, but is given a vehicle in the material world, brought down and made to act here in the midst of the amorphous ideals of the world,—what limit is there to the effect of such a thought as that? True, it acts beneath the surface, but it is there that the tide turns first; and while the evil of the world still triumphs outwardly, there is being formed beneath it the germ of a new order, based upon a new ideal, that of the hierarchy of the spiritual world—the ideal of discipleship and of service. Slowly, but surely, as diamond dust disintegrates substances of looser structure, the *fact* of discipleship is disintegrating the materialism of our time, acting to destroy the evil but to preserve the good. That is what The Theosophical Society is doing, and what you, as its members, may help it to do.

MR. HARGROVE: I should like to say a word on the subject broached by Professor Mitchell. It seems to me that all of us must have been helped to see beyond the mountains, the harvests of the future ripening. What he has outlined to us is a matter that concerns each one of us personally, because I think it is fair to assume that no member of the Society present here to-day, would be capable of leaving this task to his fellows; would wash his hands of it, with a feeling that this great undertaking will be attended to by his fellows in New York, or by those of his associates who have more time than he has to attend to spiritual ideals. My hope is that every one of us, having listened, will feel: *This is my job.* To feel less than that, clearly would be to feel less than a man.

The ideal of discipleship, the ideal of chelaship, the ideal of Masters, imposed upon the world in spite of the world, and the world blissfully unaware of what is happening to it! Blissfully unaware that its low standards are being undermined, that its godless civilization is being shattered!

The world has forgotten how to look up. It believes in God, it says, but many of you will remember Emerson's fable, in the form of a poem, about the mountain and the squirrel. The squirrel looked up at the mountain, and because it was a mountain, the squirrel got quite "het up"; but if, instead of a mountain, it had been a cloud, it would have been impossible for that little squirrel to have been so disturbed and so positive in its attitude. For the world in general, God is only a cloud, and when the world looks up, it sees nothing but a cloud. Therefore it is not afraid of God any more; it merely "loves" God,—which means that the world no longer does or abstains from doing because of God. In no case, however, whether as cloud or as mountain, does the world see in God its ideal. To see that, it would have to look down, not up; for the truth is that the ideals of the world are a little lower than it is itself.

Very different is the ideal of which Professor Mitchell was speaking. Instead of a cloud, it is a living reality which confronts us every moment, not only as a far-off mountain-top, to which we look up, but as almost within reach, at the end of our next step onward.

To see beyond the mountains the harvests of the future ripening! Yet it is work which it remains for us to do; it is a victory which it is for us to win: for although it is true, on the one hand—as was said years and years ago—that all these matters are held by the Lodge in the hollow of its hand, it is equally true, on the other hand, that it would be fatal for us, and fatal therefore for the Lodge, if we were capable of adopting an attitude of resignation, of acceptance, or of "Thy will be done" in that mistaken sense in which a man lies down and leaves fate to take care of things. Think of a man going into a battle; suppose he begins by saying, "Thy will be done,"—and in the midst of the battle, confines his activities to repeating, very hard, very often, and very emphatically, "Thy will be done"! Is his attitude that of a soldier? Surely, he has no more chance of winning that battle than a fly would have to tread down an elephant. The high gods put our fate in our own hands, and we have to fight the battle of our own lives, for the sake of the souls that are in us, for the sake of the souls that we *are*. We have to decide, each one for himself, what he will be, as well as what he will do; and it is given to us at this Convention to make that decision.

Professor Mitchell has described the process of disintegration that is taking place and has to take place, before the civilization of the future can be formed. It is for us to say, for individual members to say, how long that process shall take, how long the Lodge shall be kept waiting; for this thing is in our own hands. Once more let me suggest that it is not the task of the officers of the Society; it is not the task of a few of the older members. Unless every one of us leaves this place saturated with the conviction and with the determination: *This is for me to do*,—it might be said that this Convention will be a failure. But to think of it as a failure is impossible; to think of your failure to respond is impossible. It will be a success,—and it will be a success because you will feel and know that you are reinforced by all the efforts of the past, by all the efforts of your fellows of to-day, and by the blessing of the great Lodge that always has stood, and always will stand behind each one of us who determines to do and to be,—so that the Cause of the Lodge may triumph and that humanity may persist.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before calling upon the Secretary to make her report, the Chair would announce the appointment of the following standing committees:

Committee on Nominations

Mr. K. D. Perkins, *Chairman*
Mr. C. Russell Auchincloss
Mr. T. J. Danner

Committee on Resolutions

Mr. E. T. Hargrove, *Chairman*
Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell
Mr. Charles Saxe

Committee on Letters of Greeting

Dr. Archibald Keightley, *Chairman*
Dr. C. C. Clark
Mr. Stanley V. La Dow

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY T. S. FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 25TH, 1924.

The annual reports from the Branches of the Society show that this has been a good year among them—and it is to be hoped that isolated members, who wear the official title of members-at-large, have also shared in the rising tide of theosophic life. Did time permit, I should ask permission to read those reports, that the Convention might form its own impressions of the devoted work done by our distant fellows. It would, I think, be evident that the spirit of last year's Convention is alive in those reports. We were then urged to make preparation for the critical years which, by analogy, must precede the beginning of that third 25-year cycle on which the T. S. will enter in 1925. Clearly this call was heard; in our different centres of work a new spirit is manifest, distinctive and yet common to them all,—the spirit of the whole Society in Convention assembled. It is also equally evident that there is, at the same time, more individuality and coherence in the work of the different Branches. Personalities are far less prominent in the accounts of their activities; there is a new sense of solidarity in responsibility.

Preparation for service, would appear to be uppermost in the hearts of our members, all over the world. There was a time when Branches conducted their public meetings with the avowed object of gaining recruits. There was much exposition and exhortation; many felt obliged to brave the perils of "the teaching perch." Now the one-time teachers are studying, with their fellows, the practical, every day application of theosophic truth,—no longer content that it should be merely some part of their mental fibre, but determined to incorporate it in desire and will. The stream of visitors who came to sample our wares, is being replaced by what Branches call their "steady visitors." These visitors take part in the discussions and interest themselves in the practice of Theosophy. It may well be that a new method of acquiring active members is being established. In the early days of the T. S. when the seed was scattered as widely as possible, the garden over which Masters deigned to preside presented a curious medley of young growth, of most diverse types. Every shoot had its chance to take root, but great was the mortality! Fortunately for us there were sturdy survivals, and thanks to them, it is now a fruit-bearing garden. Perhaps additions are now to be made in the form of grafts, carefully prepared for insertion and as carefully tended. At least we are coming to realize that the vitality, the capacity for fruitfulness, is resident in the Movement itself, not in its adherents—and also that, through it, those most lacking in that capacity may yet come to fruitage.

There is, as would be hoped, much variety in the form taken by the Branch work, but nearly all conduct Study Classes—and in several localities Study Classes are laying the foundation for new Branches. At some centres, members meet only once a month, in others two or three times a week; some meet throughout the year; others celebrate vacation season by holding informal outdoor meetings. There are also several which have a number of distant members, to whom they send accounts of their meetings, regularly,—and they offer this assistance to any detached members who would like to join them and to participate in their activities. It would not be keeping faith with our foreign Branches, were no record made of the gratitude they express for the reports that have been sent to them of the meetings of the New York Branch. They explain the means that they have taken to avoid that well beaten track—"in at one ear and out at the other"—in the use of this material. When translations have to be made for

members who know no English, the translators are without doubt the gainers. Some Branches ask their members to pay toll for the reports,—circulating them with the request that each member add his own comment before passing the material on to the next member.

Your Secretary has deep sympathy for Branch officers who are contending with cases of "sleeping sickness" among their members. There is the constant dread lest isolated members of the Society succumb to this infection. Every year our record of the life history of some of them is this: they have paid their dues; they have taken their copies of the QUARTERLY from the hands of the postman,—and that is all we know of them. Some are so situated that they never have the chance to discuss their problems, face to face, with any other members; and the cares of outer life make correspondence about inner problems seem difficult or unpromising. While there are many at Headquarters who would welcome the chance to share with an isolated member what they gain from contact with the centre of the work,—few take advantage of these invitations so frequently given.

Commendation of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY might be taken as an implication that those here present are not familiar with it, but they might like to know that it has many constant readers outside our ranks. Through the propaganda fund, it has been possible to put it into a large number of libraries. Thus many people have opportunity, if Karma be propitious, to make the acquaintance of Theosophy. Occasionally, those who encounter the Movement in this way take steps to connect themselves with it. But for the most part, we get only sidelights on what happens with our library readers. One exclusive library, for instance, had maintained its subscription, year after year, although its periodical room was devoted to a different range of magazines. By chance, we learned that a certain small number of its patrons, none of them connected with our work, demanded and always read the QUARTERLY. Then there are those who regularly purchase it from their bookseller, apparently finding security in that strictly anonymous relation. As is natural, there are some among our members who first came to us as subscribers. On the other hand we have an increasing number of regular subscribers who are wholly unknown to us. Some of them have been on our list so long that the card on which their renewals are recorded is filled up on both sides; yet no communications ever come to us from these seasoned readers of our literature. Is there not, in this persistent cohesion, some basis for the hope that the fire of the Movement is spreading underground, as well as within our ranks,—perhaps to blaze up one of these days in some unsuspected quarter, where the Masters of Wisdom may even now be accumulating fuel for the feeding of its flames?

Respectfully submitted,

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.

THE CHAIRMAN: It would seem to the Chairman that commendation of the work of the Secretary's office, as reflected in the Secretary's report, might be open to such unfavourable implications as she suggested would be the result of praising the QUARTERLY. There is no one in the room who does not know the devotion, the sacrifice, the constant labour that have been given by our Secretary. Perhaps no one knows it so well as those who are closest to it. I know that I shall be expressing the feeling of the whole Society if I ask that, in accepting this report, a vote of very grateful thanks be accorded to our Secretary for her labours, and that in these thanks be also included the Assistant Secretary and all those who so generously and unceasingly help in the work of the Secretary's office.

This motion, seconded by Mr. Hargrove, was unanimously carried.

The next business being the report of the Treasurer, Mr. Johnston was asked to take the Chair.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: Once again, I am afraid that the voice is mine, but the substance not mine. Your thanks—and you have reason for thanks—for the activities of the Treasurer's office, are all due to the Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs, who has borne all the labour and

whose compilation of the results is here before me. It is those which I shall read, as confirmed by the examination of the books and bank account of the Society:

APRIL 27, 1923—APRIL 26, 1924

Receipts		*Disbursements*		
Current Dues	$636.94	Pension		$240.00
General Contributions	692.36	Printing and mailing, THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY (4 numbers)		2848.17
Propaganda Fund	1005.40	Stationery and Supplies		100.64
Subscriptions to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY	560.60	Postage		13.26
		Rent		150.00
	$2895.30	Miscellaneous:		
1925 Dues, prepaid	58.00	Moving	$24.25	
		Flowers (Mrs. Gregg)	5.00	
		Bank collections	.70	29.95
Total receipts	$2953.30	Total Disbursements		$3382.02
Balance April 27, 1923	1624.54	Balance April 26, 1924		1195.82
	$4577.84			$4577.84

Assets		*Liabilities*	
		1925 Dues, prepaid	$58.00
On deposit Corn Exchange Bank, April 26, 1924	$1195.82	Excess of assets over liabilities	1137.82
			$1195.82

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL,
Treasurer, The Theosophical Society.

April 26, 1924.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: Taking up first the Receipts for the year, the current dues amounted to $636.94, and the contributions to $692.36. So that, as has almost always been the case, the general contributions that come in the mails from our members, have outweighed the actual payments for dues,—this year, by about fifty dollars. The Propaganda Fund was initiated some years ago to enable us to keep the price of the QUARTERLY at twenty-five cents a copy, instead of raising it as every other magazine has had to raise its price during the past ten years. To that fund, members were asked to subscribe in accordance with their desire and their capacity, considering their other obligations. This year, that fund has amounted to over $1000, and enables us to keep the QUARTERLY at a price of twenty-five cents, thus making it available for everyone. The subscriptions to the magazine, for copies sent to non-members, amounted to $560. Our total receipts were $2895.30.

With the figures before you, it would be evident that the four numbers of the QUARTERLY had cost within fifty dollars of the entire income of the Society. Then there are other necessary items of expense—stationery and supplies; postage stamps; rent; pension, etc.—making our total disbursements $3382.02. That is, our expenses run, this year, four or five hundred dollars over the receipts; but since we started the year with a balance, we are able to wind up the year with a satisfactory balance also. Regarding the sum of $2848 for the four numbers of the QUARTERLY—I want to point out that the QUARTERLY is not only unique in continuing its publication at a price much less than half of its actual cost, but also unique in that it pays no salary of any kind to anyone; thus reflecting the unique character of the Movement which pays no salaries of any kind to anyone. The expenses involved in issuing the magazine are the sums paid to the printer, the paper maker, the United States Government for postage. There is no editorial expense, no office expense. That same principle runs throughout the Society. I like to point it out, because it is part of our fundamental procedure of which I think we should not lose sight. Everything that is done for the Movement is done as a gift of love. In pre-

senting this report, I should like to add, formally, my very grateful thanks to the Assistant Treasurer, and to those who have aided her in the work of the Treasurer's office.

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried that the report be accepted, and that the best thanks of the Society be given to the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer and to all who co-operated in the work. Professor Mitchell then resumed the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: At this point we have, of recent years, liked to remind ourselves of our indebtedness to Mrs. Gregg, our former Secretary, for all her past services; and have liked to express our thanks by sending her, since she is unable to be present, some little token, some flowers, from the Convention. If that is your pleasure again, I should be glad to receive such a motion.

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried that the Chair be empowered to send flowers to Mrs. Gregg, with the best wishes and remembrances of the Convention. It was then announced that the next business to come before the meeting was the report of the Committee on Nominations.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MR. PERKINS: The Committee reports that two members of the Executive Committee are to be elected by this Convention. The Committee consists of six members, each serving three years, in addition to the Treasurer, who is a member *ex officio*. Two members are elected each year, so that there are always four members standing. The Committee recommends the re-election of Mr. Hargrove and Mr. Johnston, whose terms expire at this time. [This recommendation was immediately acted upon and Mr. Hargrove and Mr. Johnston were duly re-elected to serve for a term of three years.]

The Committee next recommends, for Treasurer, the election of Professor Mitchell; for Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs; for Secretary, Miss Perkins; and for Assistant Secretary, Miss Chickering. [These recommendations were put to a vote and unanimously accepted. The Secretary of the Convention was instructed to cast one ballot for the Committee's nominees.]

THE CHAIRMAN: This ends the formal business of our morning session. If Mr. Woodbridge were here, we could count on him to speak to us of what we shall do during the intervening period—how we shall have the privilege of meeting together in two's and three's, talking over old times, enjoying ourselves in what is certainly one of the most pleasurable and perhaps one of the most valuable ways that the Convention makes possible. As he is detained by illness, I should like to ask that if any member from a distance has not already some plan for luncheon, he or she will be good enough to speak to any of the men of the New York Branch, including myself, and let us make provision.

After various announcements, the Convention adjourned until 2:30 P.M.

Afternoon Session

The Chairman announced that the first business before the Convention was the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LETTERS OF GREETING

Dr. Keightley, the Chairman of the Committee, having been unavoidably detained, Dr. Clark presented the Committee's report. He said that the members of the Committee had gone over the letters with the deepest interest and appreciation, and had been greatly impressed with the force and devotion made manifest in these messages from our distant comrades. Selections had been marked by the Committee, which he would read to the Convention, but it was hoped that, as in former years, the complete letters might be printed in the July QUARTERLY, as an important and integral part of the Convention proceedings. [The Letters of Greeting appear as an Addendum to this report.]

It was moved, seconded and unanimously carried that the report of the Committee be accepted and the Committee discharged with the thanks of the Convention.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it possible to listen to such letters of greeting, giving back to us our own feeling for our distant members and reflecting their feeling for us, without a very sincere appreciation of what those letters mean. Perhaps when we come to the report of the Committee on Resolutions, they may have something to suggest to us as to the response or answer we should make. The next business is the report of the Committee on Resolutions.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Hargrove, as Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, has asked me to introduce the following three stock resolutions:

1. That Mr. Johnston be authorized to reply to the Letters of Greeting.
2. That the Convention requests and authorizes visits of officers of the Society to Branches.
3. That the thanks of the Convention be expressed to the New York Branch for its hospitality and for the use of the room in which the Convention is held.

MR. HARGROVE: I know that when Mr. Johnston, on behalf of the Convention, acknowledges the receipt of those letters of greeting, he always expresses the deep pleasure that they give, and does everything in his power to make the writers feel that what they have written has really been helpful. It is not easy for some of us to take in things by our ears only. We like to read these letters afterwards, as they are printed, and that will be our opportunity later on. No one, for instance, could possibly have listened to the letter from Mr. Leonard, Secretary of the Branch in Los Angeles, without a feeling that there, on the West Coast, we have fellow members in the truest and deepest sense of the word. Also I should like to express my own disappointment and that of many, at the absence of Mr. George Woodbridge. I have a sincere affection for Mr. George Woodbridge, Junior, but he is not his father, and until he can become his father, he cannot take his father's place! I particularly regret the cause of that absence, which I know is illness.

I asked for the privilege of adding a word to the formal resolutions introduced by Mr. Mitchell, because the Committee on Resolutions has undergone certain transformations since it was first brought into being a number of years ago. It used to be a committee that prepared written resolutions which served as a sort of text, giving everyone an opportunity to ventilate his pent-up feelings. Since then it has become a committee on individual resolutions, and instead of pent-up feelings, we live in hopes of resolutions of the will—not like New Year or birthday resolutions, but resolutions of a peculiar and uncommon sort, resolutions that are made and kept. And so it has become, I will not say the prerogative of the Chairman of your Committee, but an opportunity seized by him to suggest certain personal resolutions (collective resolutions, if that be possible), which he thinks it would be well to make.

A good deal was said this morning about the ideal of The Theosophical Society, and about the power of that ideal. I remember expressing the hope that every one present would feel, "This is for me to do." I want to add a word or two to what I said then, because really it does amount to a resolution. This is my task, but *how*, and *where*, and upon what terms and conditions? Of course the "where" is easy. The "where" depends entirely upon where you happen to live, where your duty takes you. It does not matter whether it is New York City or Kansas City, or that third place which was suggested by Ingersoll, some years ago, as an equivalent. The place will provide the opportunities, because it will provide the difficulties, the obstacles. We need to learn how to use these as means to our end.

What do you hope to gain from Theosophy? The answer, of course, can be expressed in many different ways, and what I am suggesting is only one of the ways. But you might say that what you want is, to learn what to do, how to do it, when to do it,—to learn how to act wisely and well. Possibly you have met those with a positive genius for doing the wrong thing, —saying the wrong thing without any exception whatsoever, until you have stood open mouthed and speechless at their ingenuity. A friend of mine not long ago was ill, and had a pain in his foot in the middle of the night. He called in the night nurse, and the nurse said, "Yes, I have seen gangrene start in that way, time and again. I am so sorry for you!" The patient, much amused, related the incident to a friend, and the friend said, "That night nurse had had wide experience; according to his lights he was being tactful; most people like to have

their sufferings and symptoms exaggerated, and feel that lack of gloom means lack of sympathy!" It was a reminder that one man's meat is another man's poison; that if you are talking to a certain type of peasant, you must not tell him that he is not so very sick, but that if you are talking to a man of average intelligence, it is a mistake to suggest he has gangrene when even at two o'clock in the morning he knows he has not! It was a reminder also that it is not easy to speak wisely to all sorts and conditions of people. Yet this, among other things, is what we must learn to do as a part of discipleship, seeing that discipleship includes the whole of wisdom, with the strength of character to obey, to perform, that which wisdom reveals,—for to see and not to do, was and is the beginning of every blindness.

It may be taken for granted, therefore, that no matter where we may stand in the scale of evolution, or on what plane we may be functioning, the essence of what we should like to know is how to act rightly and wisely. We should realize, then, in the first place, that every stupidity, every blindness, is due to a moral defect, to a defect in the will. All of us, in the eyes of Masters, must be inconceivably stupid,—even though, among ourselves, there may be degrees of stupidity! In any case, our own stupidities, whatever they may be—our lack of intelligence and of understanding—should certainly concern us, and, looking for a cure, we should begin with the basic realization that they spring from moral defects. There is nothing the matter with our minds. There are those who are born insane; their brains are diseased. But our brains are not diseased. Our minds are all right. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the man who is a genius at doing the wrong thing owes his genius to his self-indulgence. Self-indulgence: we have a great many ways of doing as we like. Some of you may remember an essay that Matthew Arnold wrote, at about the time of the foundation of The Theosophical Society. He called it, "Doing as One Likes" (from *Culture and Anarchy*). He was dealing with conditions in England, but you will agree with me that there is not much difference between English human nature and American human nature,—although, recently, the Englishman seems to have been giving freer vent to his nature, with disastrous results. This was the way Matthew Arnold put it:

"More and more, because of this our blind faith in machinery, because of our want of light to enable us to look beyond machinery to the end for which machinery is valuable, this and that man, and this and that body of men, all over the country, are beginning to assert and put in practice an Englishman's right to do what he likes; his right to march where he likes, meet where he likes, enter where he likes, hoot as he likes, threaten as he likes, smash as he likes."

You might think such an objective an exaggeration of the aim and objective of any aspirant for discipleship. I do not think it is, because too many of those who make up their minds to the effect, "This is for me to do," purpose to carry out that task on their own terms. They are going to become disciples their own way: and of course the tragedy of that proposition is that it does not work; it cannot be done. When we begin to assert to ourselves the right to do as we like, to hoot as we like and to smash as we like, we are running directly counter, not only to the ideals of Theosophy but to the ideals of decency and to the ideals of common sense. The truth is that just in order to live and to become human, we must deny nearly all of our inherent, native impulses and inclinations. Irrespective of that, which I suggest as a theme for discussion, it is certain that if we are going to consider the subject of discipleship, we must face the fact that most of the time we shall have to work against the grain, against a very strong current of inclination. Someone once said that he had come to the conclusion it was never safe to write a letter unless he was strongly disinclined to write that letter. When we have a strong impulse to do something or other, experience ought to have taught us to be wary of that impulse. When there are three or four duties to be performed and you do not know which of them to attack first, all you have to do is to go ahead and do the one you least want to do,—and you can then be almost sure you are doing the will of the Almighty. You do not have to create your opportunities, seeing that you have already created your obstacles, and that they run to meet you. Always and from all quarters, Karma, the benevolent Law, sends us our opportunities; sends us the stuff out of which discipleship can be made, sends us things to resist and which resist us, so that ultimately we may become

strong. It has well been said that no bird could ever learn to fly except for the opposition of the air, the beating of the air. We can never grow, never become anything, never learn how to cease blundering, except by means of overcoming the inclinations within us.

It would not be wise if we were to think that discipleship is a path with roses under foot, roses to the right and to the left, with angels and others pushing us from behind and dragging us from before. It is nothing of the sort, and I think that it must be in accordance with your own observation of life in general, that growth on those terms would be impossible. You have all seen an infant learning to walk, and you know that the child stumbles and falls. You are not alarmed, and you know he must learn to move his own feet, to do these things for himself. The Lodge of Masters cannot do everything for us. They can steer us occasionally, they can pick us up, but we have got to do the work ourselves. Also let us beware if we feel particularly pious. When we feel that we are having wonderful inner experience, let us beware,—especially if we are hugging ourselves because of it. Be grateful for it, yes. But again, there are distinctions, there is the true and the false. Nearly always, true experience brings further opportunity for sacrifice. Anyone who has loved at all, knows that to love is to suffer. Very young and inexperienced people think that to love means merely a delicious sensation. But ask a mother with ten children, and she may know more about it. You do not even have to go to the mother with ten children—I suspect that one child would be quite enough! To love *is* to suffer. There is no escape from it. It is a law of life. Go one step further back, and you will find that love *demands* suffering.

We read, and perhaps know of Masters; and we know, theoretically or otherwise, of their love for mankind, of their love for those above them to whom they look up and whom they adore. But do not forget that the greater their love, the greater their suffering, and that it is impossible for great love ever to suffer enough. And so, if at any time we should be inclined to feel too gay about our discipleship, let us repeat to ourselves some such verity as that; let us turn our eyes to Masters and remind ourselves of what they are and of how they became that eternal marvel. So we shall learn. Looking up, we shall have an opportunity at least to become humble. It has been said that humility is the foundation of every spiritual growth. Whether we understand these things, or whether we do not—whether we are inspired by them or whether we are not—I, for one, would say,—begin to be a disciple, and understand afterwards. That simple, ignorant, blind resolution, if honestly taken, if honestly worked at, day by day, will lead inevitably to light, to understanding. None of us has enough of it. Such as we have we seek to give: but blessed is the man who starts to work at discipleship, regardless of his light. The doing of the next duty as he thinks a disciple might do it, is enough. If he will keep on with that he will become, in his time, a teacher of Adepts. So, while this great ideal presents enormous difficulties, yet I think it is so simple that a child can grasp it and live it and be it, and move forward to true manhood. There is no difficulty in the way of the man who says, "I will do it. I will die, if need be, but I will do it." In that spirit, anything can be attained, and it is God's truth that nothing can be attained without it.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is with hesitancy that, before asking you to take action upon the Report of the Committee on Resolutions, I venture earnestly to urge each one of you to apply what has just been said, not to someone else, but to yourself. On the doors of private offices one sometimes sees a sign, reading—"Keep out. This means *you*." When we are told to keep out of easy satisfaction with ourselves; when we are told that if we are to serve and follow the path of discipleship, it must not be with self-indulgence; that always and for ever it must mean sacrifice, and real sacrifice—not sacrifice of something someone else likes, but sacrifice of something *we* like; that it must always be in the path of duty, against the grain, (if our task be easy, be what we already like, what could we accomplish by it?),—when Mr. Hargrove tells us that wearing out the lower nature, which clogs and blinds and holds us, is the Way,—I want to add to each one, without exception, "This means *you*, and not another."

It was moved, seconded and carried that the report of the Committee on Resolutions be accepted, and the Committee discharged with thanks. It was then requested that the Convention might hear from the Branch delegates and members-at-large. As a member-at-large, Mrs. Gitt was first asked to speak.

MRS. GITT: As I said last year, there is a religious war on in Washington. We get the best and the worst there, and if one goes around Washington with open eyes, one can see what is happening all over the world. The outlook in the churches there is better than it was last year—they are getting their equilibrium. One surprising thing is the amount of theosophical teaching that is being disseminated in all the denominations, of course without that label. The clergymen who are progressive as well as intelligent are finding it difficult to please all sections of their congregations—some call them atheists and others revere them as Christian mystics.

We have also had a flood of psychologists, this year—two of whom captivated the city, with their new evangelism, which is applied psychology with religion added; and they offer the lure of practical, definite instruction in the underlying principles of physical, mental and spiritual law. People in these days are craving such teaching, are even willing to put it into practice—but the churches have none to offer, having no esoteric centre. There is much restlessness in the air, and I have asked many people what it is that they want. They cannot always tell, but what they say boils down to this: they want to have the other man fully considered; they want the race to have good sound bodies and a better adjustment of the things of this life. I am convinced that there will have to be new legislation along this line, but clearly there is more to be done than that—for most of the ills in life are due to stupidity and self-indulgence.

MRS. GORDON: I am always glad to speak for the Middletown Branch, with which I keep closely in touch although I am living in New York. Some of the members are very devoted to the welfare of the Branch, others are indifferent, and do not feel any obligation to come regularly or to give anything to it. Mr. Roberts, one of the oldest members, really carries the responsibility for the Branch, and during the winter he contributed some articles on Theosophy to one of the local papers. There are a number of outsiders who are becoming interested, and may be good material for the future. I have been asked to give the greetings of the Middletown Branch to the Convention, and to say that we, its members, are struggling hard to keep the link there unbroken.

MR. DANNER: The thought that I should like to express was suggested to me by one of the resolutions that were referred to as stock resolutions. It has been my privilege to come here for a number of years, and to vote thanks to the New York Branch for its most gracious entertainment. I have had it in my heart, before this, to say that I hardly feel that simple vote of thanks to be enough. It is no small thing to plan for and take the responsibility of a Convention. When we are uplifted as we have been to-day, I should feel selfish if I did not say what is in my heart to say. There are three thoughts, in fact. First, that I believe everyone who comes here, from far or near, is more than grateful for all that is done for us during these two days. Then the second thought,—what does the Convention do for me? I think each one of us should ask himself that. If we simply come here to be uplifted, and then go back home and merely wait for the next year and another uplift, it would hardly be worth travelling a thousand miles to come. But it means more to me. As my problems meet me, or catch up with me, sometimes I call on the Masters for assistance, and at the same time, the faces of those who mean so much to us here come before me and help far more than they would realize. "Let your light so shine"—and the light that we see here does radiate almost daily, and does help me to meet the problems that arise, does help me to serve,—a thought which has been so beautifully expressed here to-day. What is there in life, if we are not willing to try our level best to serve as God has given us the privilege to do? The time would be almost wasted if it were simply for self that we came here. We must go home feeling that we have this wonderful inspiration, this wonderful example that we may carry through the year, carry it on until we come again next year. Then there is the third thought, of the QUARTERLY. There is no greater spiritual periodical than that, and the New York Branch is largely responsible for it. Not only do we have the great inspiration and help of the Convention, but month after month, that wonderful magazine carries us along. I think, then, that we who come here should express in some way our appreciation of all that is being done for us—not only once a year, but every month and every day.

MRS. REGAN: I am glad that Mr. Danner has spoken about gratitude to the older members

of the Society, for it gives me courage to say what is in my heart. It is filled with gratitude for the privilege of being here, and to those who have had the understanding to guide the Society. We all know that the best way to show our appreciation of it, is to try to increase our understanding of the principles that underlie the T.S., and to use them in our every day life. Clearly, the real life of a Branch does not lie in its meetings, but in the wise and unselfish effort of its members to live the theosophic life.

MR. FORBES: I am a member-at-large, and this is the first Convention that I have had an opportunity to attend. I am deeply conscious of the privilege and of the great benefit that, in common with everyone here, I am deriving. A member-at-large is more or less isolated. He has no one who feels as he does, to turn to in times of doubt and difficulty and "weak knees." We have not been thinking about Theosophy long, before we realize that Theosophy is a *living* principle. We must live it, but all our surroundings are organized differently; the thought, the feeling and the concerns of the world around us are polarized in other directions. There are times when one becomes sceptical,—the tremendous difficulty, the obstacles in the way of living a theosophic life are so great. One opens a book like *Light on the Path*, and it seems impossible that a poor worm like oneself should ever be able to walk on that Path. Of course one does not always stay on these low levels, but these are the times when we isolated members feel keenly the lack of the inspiration that comes from close comrades, who are striving along the same way. Of course we have our compensations. Those of us who are not habitually surrounded by this great aura of inspiration and achievement that is centred here, may be more profoundly impressed by it. When we come here, and find life and light enclosed in personalities—a living, breathing thing, a light shining out from another human being whom we can know—it gives us a feeling of hope for the future, though we are only poor specimens ourselves, as yet.

DR. TORREY: I have felt something to-day that I have not felt for a long time before, and I am glad I came. I had said I was not coming, because I could not give anything and would be a weak link. In reply, I was told that it was better to be a weak link than no link at all. We who are separated, become engrossed in our work or our study; and soon the light fades away and we get into that curious deadness that makes us wonder whether, after all, we have not deluded ourselves, whether there is anything in us at all. I have been working with young men, and I feel that they are willing and glad to receive this sort of thing, if given the opportunity. It is amazing, the response that one gets, from young men in the colleges; as yet they are idealists, still looking for something real and satisfying in life. That has been most forcibly brought home to me by experiences I have had in teaching.

MISS RICHMOND: I suppose that we ought always to do the thing we hate most to do—in which case, I must stand up. My thoughts go back to what Mr. Hargrove said. Why should we not all expect the pentecostal flame to descend on the Society? The disciples were all gathered in one place with one accord.

MRS. DANNER: It seems to me that this Convention has been ringing with that line from *Light on the Path*, "It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow." And also with those lines from Emerson:

> "Hast thou named all the birds without a gun;
> Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk;
> At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse;
> Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust;
> And loved so well a high behaviour,
> In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
> Nobility more nobly to repay?
> Oh, be my friend and teach me to be thine."

MR. HARGROVE: In view of the generous things said about the older members, it would be well for one of the older members to speak for the others. All of us would deeply regret any misunderstanding or wrong impression. We all know that really there are no teachers in this

Society. We are fellow students; and if some of us have had more experience, owing to having survived, by hook or by crook, the pressure of things somewhat longer than others, we are necessarily anxious to share that experience with those of you who have not been equally privileged. What I want to tell you is this: I wish that you could have an idea of the gratitude of the older members when there is a sign, here, there or elsewhere, of response. Several of you have come a thousand miles to this Convention. I tell you that an older member would walk ten thousand miles to help someone—anyone—who really meant business. Now if that be true of those who are merely older members, what must be the truth about Masters? Yet we need not go so far as that. I want to limit the subject to our feeling of gratitude to-day to those of you who have spoken, who have responded, who, throughout the year, show signs of trying. Think of it as if it were a tug of war. No matter who is pulling against us, no matter what is pulling against The Theosophical Society as such—here is a body of people trying to pull on the side of Masters—and some of them gasping for breath once in a while. Then you come, or somebody else comes, and lends a hand. Do you know what we feel about it? Can you not *believe* that we are grateful? And so it is that while you speak of your gratitude—and I know speak from your hearts—I think it is only fair that we should be privileged to speak of ours.

Mr. Perkins: This morning, Professor Mitchell spoke of the atom and the nucleus, and this afternoon, as Mr. Hargrove was speaking, showing us so plainly what it is the privilege of each one of us to do, and telling us so plainly that it is going to cost us something to do it,—my mind ran back to the atom and the nucleus. We have all known for a long time that The Theosophical Society is intended to be the nucleus of a great future brotherhood of humanity. As I understand it, the Society is not to be the brotherhood, but is intended to become the nucleus of that brotherhood. We have all read in the papers recently what our scientists have been telling us of their discoveries about the atom—the electrons that fly around on the outside of it in their various orbits. But most interesting of all is what they have told us about the nucleus—that infinitesimal point at the centre which is the whole thing. Nothing else counts but that tiny nucleus, controlling the form, the motion, the action, the life, the chemical affinities—everything—of that atom. Scientists tell us that if one of those tiny atoms were enlarged until it was some forty inches in diameter, the nucleus at the centre would be about the size of a needle point. And still it contains all the power of the atom. I think the reason is that the stamp of the Eternal is imprinted at the heart of each one of those atoms, just as it is imprinted at the heart of each universe. The nucleus bears that stamp; it is not a static thing —surely we could not think of an impression from the Lodge, from the Eternal ones above us, as being a static and fixed thing. My own feeling is that the stamp that marks the nucleus of the great brotherhood of the humanity of the future—that which The Theosophical Society must be, that which each one of us in turn must decide to take our individual share in being—that stamp from above, is a living thing. It is a stamp in consciousness. It is simply the lower end of a ray of light from the Supreme—not static but changing, changing with speed and adaptability, at every response which the Society is able to make to it. As the result of this Convention, I hope that each one of us may make up his mind to take his part in that nucleus. Infinitesimal in size, as compared with this great world about us, the potency of that nucleus must be infinite because it is so powerfully drawn toward a centre which is the dynamic centre of the universe itself. Back must go the response of the nucleus, straight up through the hierarchical line, to the Masters. It is they who have given us an inestimable privilege, if we are willing to be nothing of ourselves,—the privilege of being their servants, of bearing their mark, and of living, here and now, the life which endures.

The Chairman: The time has come when, if we have finished the business of the Convention, we should adjourn. We have heard from visiting members, and we are going to have the opportunity of hearing from our New York members to-night, at the regular meeting of the New York Branch, which is to be held here in this room, at 8:30 this evening. Though it is a meeting of the Branch rather than a formal meeting of the Convention, it does, in a certain sense, pick up the overflow from the Convention, and sometimes the overflow is well worth catching. As this Convention ends, I think we must all feel that we should seek to go forth

from it carrying with us what has been given us here, and striving during the coming year to put it into action—so that we may bring it back here again, with interest.

MR. MITCHELL: Before we adjourn, may I say that I should regret to have the Convention close without having an opportunity to give expression to my gratitude for The Theosophical Society, for the continuance of the Theosophical Movement, for the wonderful ideals which are presented to us here,—gratitude to those who have brought those ideals within our reach, maintained them, and made it possible for us to try to act on them. I would suggest that those who wish to give expression to their gratitude, be given an opportunity to rise as an indication of it.

All present rose for a moment, in silence. The Convention then was duly adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary of Convention.

JULIA CHICKERING,
Assistant Secretary of Convention.

LETTERS OF GREETING

KRISTIANIA, NORWAY.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: At the period of transition from winter to spring, from the time when the qualities of darkness, "foulness," and inertia are predominant, to the time when nature—pregnant with energy and fertility—wakes up and makes its never failing attempt to take the reins, the opposing forces in nature are waging war against each other, and the combat is furious especially at the equinoctial point.

This is the state of the world to-day. Man experiences it in nature at every recurring year—the Masters experience it in the world at every recurring century,—and the gods in the universe at every recurring greater cycle.

Looking at the conditions on our globe at the present day from this point of view, there is nothing strange going on, nothing to worry over. We know the issue beforehand. Failure is shut out. "Remember the armies of Heaven marching across the sky, and the great St. Michael leading" (Cavé). But remember also that we are the skirmishers in this world of the armies of Heaven, and that St. Michael has trusted us with a most important and hard part of the great battle;—and remembering this, let everyone faithfully fill his place according to his strength, face life and death alike, and be unconcerned as to the results.

Comrades, the small band of skirmishers in Norway are sending you their heartfelt greetings, asking you to compass also them in your thoughts and silent prayers to-day.

Fraternally yours,

T. H. KNOFF,
[*Chairman, Karma Branch.*]

ARVIKA, SWEDEN.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Even this time we will, as has been practised the last years, keep the day for Convention as a sort of holy day. It is this day we have our annual meeting, the only meeting in the year that is open only for members, not for outsiders.

This our meeting takes place at the same hour as the Convention, and we send then in thought to the members assembled in New York and to all co-workers in the world, our best wishes and humble greetings.

Fraternally, for the Arvika Branch,

HJALMAR JULIN,
[*President.*]

AUSSIG-SCHRECKENSTEIN III, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Although we have not yet the privilege to partake of a Convention of The Theosophical Society, I believe we feel a certain intimacy

with you, especially at Convention time; not an intimacy from any outer intercourse, but caused by an inner communion which grows deeper more and more from year to year. So we hope to share your common feeling and spirit in a certain degree, and would Heaven give us the power to thank the Masters adequately for the effects of such a sharing.

Without an increase of any member, but likewise without a loss of any one, we have remained the little band of workers for the Cause of the Masters. Therefore our efforts were directed on spiritual, individual attainment.

As suggested by Mr. Hargrove, we were subjected to "another real test" of our ability to recognize the theosophical principles underlying a situation somewhat similar to the situation which existed in August, 1914, by the occupation of the Ruhr basin by the French. I hope we have passed that trial more successfully than the first trial in 1914. We have learned meanwhile to penetrate in some degree a false psychic glamour and to hate the evil. Another such situation which involved a certain test for us, was the depreciation of the French money at the beginning of this year, caused by great financial, assault manœuvres. Envy, jealousy and a crafty malignity were the motives thereto. The intention of the German and German-minded financiers was, to evoke a precipitate "déroute" of the franc, whereby the Germans manifested their old creed in the efficacy of terror. But a man or a nation who believes in terror must be persuaded from the idea that there is nothing in the others to vanquish fear and horror. Such a man is unable to measure the spiritual powers of the soul, which meet the fear and overcome it. Terror has nothing to do with the power which the righteous man uses to help the White Powers. By his decision to sacrifice himself as an instrument in the hands of them, he makes it possible that tremendous spiritual powers are focussed in himself, and it is by their own impetuosity and irresistibility that they operate and so break down the resistance of the momentum of the evil powers. The righteous man believes in the efficacy of the force of his heart or of his soul or of his Master, whether he is conscious of that fact or not, but the Germans believe in the efficacy of terror and the devilish methods of terror. Therefore that event was especially a test of our trust in the moral strength and ability of defence of "La France éternelle." We had to prove whether we have extirpated every element of defeatism, and whether we hold a strong conviction of triumph for the cause of the French in all departments and in each activity of life. We saw the deep-seated mendacity, cunning and hypocrisy of Germany, as she was appealing to the mercy of the world by her mendacious propaganda as to her children who would starve with hunger and with cold. She was sending her children abroad (also to some parts of Bohemia, and they were the best and living evidence of her mendacity); and German-minded people here made collections of money, a donation to Germany. So we had often opportunities to prove our discrimination and to practise a rejection with passionate abhorrence. Further we see the extensive spread of adoration and cultivation of a popular and national originality, which means truly licence in the development of the individuality.

We know that our trials and tests are repeated infinitely every day in all possible variations, and that we have so rich opportunities to perfect ourselves in the capacity to discriminate, to select and to reject, to practise the real cursing of all evil things, whether we meet them in ourselves or in others.

Thus we hope at the centre of our hearts that we will become worthier members, from year to year, and create thereby a real return-current for the help we receive now from you and the heart of the Society.

In conclusion let me convey to you our very best wishes for the success of the Convention and receive you all our heartiest greetings.

I remain, sincerely and fraternally yours,

OTHMAR KÖHLER,
Secretary, Aussig Branch.

OCUMARE DEL FUY, MIRANDA, VENEZUELA.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: In the name of the members of the "Altagracia de Orituco," Branch, I send to you our cordial greeting. Though at times under

adverse circumstances, we have continued our theosophical labour unbroken. We go forward with our method of working: study, meditation and to live the Doctrine.

United to you in spirit, and in that solemn hour of your meeting, we wish the greater success, and the Masters' blessings inspire your deliberations.

Sincerely I remain, fraternally yours,

ACISCLO VALEDON.
[*Secretary.*]

SANFERNANDO DE APURE, VENEZUELA.

To the T. S. in Convention Assembled: The "Jehoshua" Branch sends its unanimous and very friendly greetings to the members of the T. S. at the time of the annual Convention, with the assurance that the comrades of this Branch will be with their fellow members in spirit on that day.

With best wishes and heartiest greetings,

Yours very sincerely,

D. SALAS BAÏZ,
President.

CARACAS, VENEZUELA.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: The "Rama Venezuela," with fraternal love, sends its cordial greetings to the brothers in solemn Convention assembled, and expresses its fervid wishes that on this occasion, as always, the blessing of Masters be made incarnate in practical deeds, this assembly to constitute a new opportunity to snatch another portion of fire from Heaven.

We do not think it is statistical information, number of members, and details of the *modus operandi*, etc. our Convention is primarily interested to know about, since in our Society the workers are not counted by the number but by the tools each one is able to handle, by the use he can give, through the different circumstances of life, to the Art of Theosophy learned in the workshop of the Theosophical Society, our Alma Mater.

If it were possible for us to give a faithful summary of our work as a Branch, we would say that during the year elapsed we have dwelt collectively on the matter of Discipleship and the direct action of Masters in the Theosophical Movement.

By a gracious blessing of Fate ours has been a "Devotional" Branch, and it has always fallen to our notice that the elements of a purely intellectual nature or of psychical tendencies, deserted, *motu propio*, our ranks. And when we say "purely," it is because we did not lack those other elements which, preserving the devotional and intellectual qualities alike, evidenced there was no divorce between Heaven and earth. In this connection our memory is filled with the lasting remembrance of our brother F. Dominguez Acosta.

Thus, the Branch, as a whole, begins to discriminate between the Real and the Unreal. Several of its members—almost the majority—projected a private meeting which is held fortnightly on Mondays to go over a special study about Discipleship, and have selected as themes, the Three Fundamental Propositions of the *Secret Doctrine*, *Shankaracharya's Catechism*, and *The Tattwas*, which study will be followed by *Letters that Have Helped Me*, *Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and other works and writings dealing with the subject, the purpose being to render ourselves of practical assistance in the Theosophical Movement by living Theosophy, thereby each one testing himself before making any appeal to the Law.

These meetings, as well as the regular ones attended on Saturdays, are full of fraternal spirit, energy and will, pointing to a definite end: the training of positive virtues.

In the meetings held on Saturdays, the themes are derived from the reading of spiritual works, the QUARTERLY, the reports of the N. Y. Branch, and the consideration of modern world affairs. This is generally done in the form of "enquêtes," which have proved to be exceedingly interesting because, besides the training each one undergoes, we are benefited through the

individual co-operation of the whole, and because it is a fact known to the members of the Branch that this has a Soul, of which every one can become the expositor in so far as putting aside his "personality," he throws open the gates of the channel of his "individuality."

In regard to the outer, we can resume it thus: absolute regularity in the attendance of meetings; more attention given to the observance of Regulations and duties; continuance of the translation of our English works.

With our eager desire that this new Convention of ours be another fulcrum for the Lever of the Lodge, and united with you in soul and heart as our meeting will be held here at the same time you assemble there, we are,

Fraternally yours,

JUAN J. BENZO,
Corresponding Secretary.

WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: The Whitley Bay members send fraternal and sincere greetings, coupled with their united thoughts of goodwill, and the desire to help at the deliberations of the meeting.

Reviewing the past year, the keynote of the Branch has been that of Service, and the value of the motive appears very vivid and bright, against the sombre background of selfishness and self-interest which at present masquerades in this country under the cloak of Social'sm,—where many believe that everyone will receive more, and give less, and where Justice and Freedom will be bartered and destroyed by the negation of individual effort and merit.

Our united thoughts are with you so that our earnestness of purpose may combine with yours to bring to those searching after truth, that knowledge which would help so much at the present time. May the session be full to overflowing with understanding and unanimity of purpose for the welfare of all.

Faithfully yours,

FREDERICK A. ROSS,
President Blavatsky Lodge.

GATESHEAD-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

The members of the Gateshead Branch send greetings to all members in Convention assembled, and send their best wishes for a pleasant and profitable meeting. Our thoughts will be with you; and may your effort bear the fruit it deserves and be a great success.

Fraternally yours,

PERCY W. WARD,
Secretary.

SOUTH SHIELDS, ENGLAND.

The members of "Krishna Branch," South Shields, England, send hearty greetings, and sincere good wishes for the success of the present Convention.

HANNAH MAUGHAN, *Secretary.*
JOSEPH WILKINSON, *President.*

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: On behalf of the members of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch, I beg to send you their heartiest greetings and best wishes for a successful Convention. It seems to us, that as time goes on, it is more and more evident that the test of success is the life and spirit manifested in the Work. Does our interest extend to the point of making the things we believe to be true, a living power in our lives? It strikes home to us in no uncertain manner that we must *be* the truth we would give out, if we would be of real service. Such individual effort seems to be our work at the present time, and

consequently as a Branch, we make no appeal that has not for its basis the keynote of discipleship. We believe that the *definite* aim to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity should be the true drawing power, and that our work should be to that end alone.

Yours fraternally,

E. HOWARD LINCOLN,
President.

AYLSHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

The Norfolk Branch of The Theosophical Society sends its greetings to the Convention, with all best wishes for a very good meeting, and helpful discussions. I have not very much to report on the year's work. As in former years, our Branch is small, and the members live widely separated from one another. Some of us have never met personally; but each year I think we are more conscious of the tie that unites us, through our theosophical study and correspondence. Following our usual plan, we have been studying a set portion of the Patanjali *Yoga Sutras* with Mr. Johnston's comments. We write down each month the thoughts that the study has led to, with questions and comments, and these papers are circulated among the members of our Branch. We are much indebted to our friends in New York for the excellent reports of the proceedings at the meetings of their Branch. These are sent round to each of our members, and we find them most interesting and helpful. It is a curious fact that our study and correspondence coincide very often with some of the ideas which are expressed in your discussions, showing, I think, that the tie which binds members of the T. S. together is a very real one. We make a point of taking one month in the year for study of the Convention Report, as soon as we receive this, when it appears in the QUARTERLY.

We have gained no new members this year, and our Branch has lost one member through resignation. I think we are meant to learn that numbers do not matter so much as the sincere devotion and individual effort of the members, and I am reminded of the beautiful story in *Fragments*, in which we are shown that a whole world can be illuminated from the lamp lighted by the faith and love and prayer of one single soul. So that we realize that there is no need for discouragement, provided that we each of us make sure that we are doing the best that we can, neglecting no opportunity, and persevering on the path that we have been shown to be the right one, in the service of the Master and of his work.

I enclose a list of members of our Branch, and with every good wish from us all for a very successful Convention, I am,

Yours sincerely,

ALICE GRAVES,
Secretary, The Norfolk Branch T.S.

[Cablegram] AYLSHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

Greetings and best wishes for Convention from ALICE GRAVES, THEODORA DODGE, ESPOIR AND HOPE BAGNELL.

[Cablegram] OBERHOFENTHUNERSEE, SWITZERLAND.

To Members of Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, Greetings and most sincere good wishes. We are with you in thought and heart. EMMA ACHELIS MILLER, HOPE MILLER, GARDINER MILLER, JUNIOR, MARTA STEARNS.

CINCINNATI, OHIO.

Dear Fellow T. S. Members: To all Fellow Members in T. S. Convention Assembled, "Greeting!" Just a line of cheer and well wishes for a successful session, and the good health and joy of all present, is the sincere wish of all Cincinnati members.

Fraternally,

GUY MANNING, *President.*

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

To the Officers and Members, Theosophical Society, in Annual Convention Assembled: The members of Pacific Branch extend to you a most cordial greeting, with their pledge of fraternal co-operation in continuous activity.

The thought comes to us at this time that during an epoch in the world's history, when the ancient truths had been debased by priestcraft, a Western Master appeared in the Western world to check the reaction toward materialism, and to restore the pristine truth. His ministry was of short duration, and his disciples but few, very few, and toward the end of his ministry, seemingly feeling the hopelessness of his mission, he gave voice to that pathetic appeal, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" He made the great sacrifice for humanity, as all Masters do—must do.

Two thousand years later when the teachings of the Western Master had become perverted by priestcraft, and the reaction again was toward materialism, Eastern Masters again brought to the Western world the pristine truth, and the seed fell into the minds of a vast number, but lodged in the hearts of but a few, very few, and these few became the disciples of these Eastern Masters, forming the outward link for the preservation of pristine truth in the Western world from its divine source, the Lodge of the Masters, keeping the connection therewith for the first time in many centuries.

As students of Theosophy attached to The Theosophical Society, which has been connectedly carried forward without an inner rupture by these few disciples, have we, as such students, risen to the opportunity that lies so plainly before us, in an attempt to ally ourselves with these few disciples in the making of an unbroken chain from the Lodge to the outer world as a continuity? There are numbers of persons who say that they are Theosophists, enrolled in organizations carrying that name, who in public places cry loud and long, "Lord! Lord!" and whose hearts are knotted against him, the seed having only found lodgment in their minds.

The sunlight falls on all places alike, but only bright surfaces can reflect it; the divine light falls equally and impartially on all hearts, but only clean and pure hearts can reflect it, and he alone is the real man who is illumined by the light of true knowledge.

Sincerely and fraternally,

ALFRED L. LEONARD,
Secretary, Pacific Branch.

DENVER, COLORADO.

To the Secretary T. S.: The Virya Branch of The Theosophical Society submits the following annual report for the year 1923–1924: Meetings have been held fortnightly since the last Saturday in October, with the exception of one meeting in December, when, because of the absence of the President and the many duties connected with Christmas, it was omitted. Meetings are held from two-thirty to four P.M., at the residence of Mrs. Edwin Hughes Roberts, 1835 Williams Street. We have neither gained nor lost any members during the year, nor have we had visitors except for one person who is perfectly regular in attendance although she has not formally joined the Society. The meetings have consequently been conducted as a study class, the members doing a good deal of outside reading, bringing the results of their research, and the questions which have arisen, to the branch for discussion. We have devoted several meetings to the doctrines of Karma, the Seven Principles, Rounds and Races, and to the explanation of various theosophical terms; our reading has been largely from articles in the QUARTERLY, principally the current numbers, but with occasional references to the earlier copies of the magazine. Questions of the day have been discussed and certain sermons and lectures which have absorbed the thought of the city have been analysed theosophically. The greatest amount of our time has been given to the basic principles of action and conduct, the more theoretical subjects having been studied purely with the idea of clarifying and elucidating the problems confronting us all.

The attendance has been very regular, and though we have not increased in numbers, we feel that we have in solidarity. The meetings, we feel, are a very great joy and benefit to us all. We sincerely regret that we cannot be present at the Convention, and we all join in our deep appreciation of the wonderful work which is being carried on by the Society. We shall eagerly await the reports and the printed addresses.

ANNE EVANS,
President Virya Branch.

[Telegram] BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS.

May Masters' blessings continue upon Society, its work and members, including those who have gone ahead, and give to each one of us added determination to keep the link unbroken. The world needs the single truth of Theosophy more than ever in these days of attractive half truths, pseudo brotherhood, gentle condonation of evil in oneself and in others, and confusion between friends and foes, if civilization is to survive in any phase. Can it survive apart from Theosophy? Do not world, church and peoples alike cry for leadership from the Lords of the Law, which our obedience, humility, and effective chelaship through Theosophy alone may make possible?

Fraternally,

GEORGE WOODBRIDGE.

LAWRENCE, KANSAS.

I do not think that a day passes but that I am in N. Y., in the Studio. You may be sure I will be with you all Saturday and Sunday, with all the love there is in me, and may Master help me not to disturb in the least wise. And may we all become more and more deserving of the great love and peace which is Masters'.

Of charity everlasting,
Give them all my love.

Fraternally,

FLORA FRIEDLEIN.

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Again, as in the past two years, we send from here as isolated members, our sincere wishes for a successful Convention with full blessing of the Master.

We hope that the progress which this Convention represents, will be of the utmost importance for the whole of mankind.

We will try, during the time of the Convention, to be in our thinking and feeling with our comrades.

Heartiest greetings.

Yours sincerely,

FRANZ WILLKOMM,
MARIE WILLKOMM.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: We ask you on behalf of our small circle to accept our heartiest greetings and sincerest wishes for a successful Convention.

Our whole work during the last year was pervaded, as in previous ones, by our firm determination to again erect in Germany the banner of Theosophy.

The study of the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, with the inspiring comments of Mr. Johnston, as well as the study of the Convention report of last year, deepened and intensified our consciousness and our responsibility, and filled our hearts with new fervour.

We pray to the Master for sustenance, that we may succeed in achieving that degree of humiliation and repentance necessary to enable us to help efficaciously even here in Germany.

We shall be with the Convention with heart and soul.

Fraternally yours,

OSKAR STOLL,
ALFRED FRIEDEWALD.

SCHRECKENSTEIN, AUSSIG, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

Dear Comrades! You are assembled in unity to express your thanks to Him for all His help that is coming to us always. Dear friends, I will take part in that thanks, and hope to find the great heart, the heart in which we are united in reality. The door is not shut,—should our heart break open widely.

With kindest thanks and regards I am very sincerely, your great debtor,

HERMANN ZERNDT.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

To the Convention of The Theosophical Society: We send our best greetings and sincere good wishes for the deliberations and efforts of the Convention assembled, and may we be allowed to do our duty to relate about our labours during the last year.

The situation in Germany from all sides viewed, is dark and difficult. We are of opinion that things would be getting better, if a spark of knowledge could be won; the absence of insight is believed by us all as the cause of the great catastrophe. Therefore we concentrated our efforts as well as possible to gain a glimpse into truth. We are seven members: H. Walzer, F. Weber, O. Weber, M. Hanff, B. Hanff, C. Ihrke, O. Ihrke. Our meetings took place three times a week. The subject of study was Patanjali, translated by Mr. Johnston; the QUARTERLY further serves for our instruction, also old numbers as far as we can get at them. We have learned therefrom things about the inner life in France and understand the high esteem expressed in so many articles of the QUARTERLY. We had about France the superficial meaning of public opinion and hear now, that France is the sword and wedge of the Master Christ.

We believe also that our opportunity is great now, if we are able to see the will of the Master and to work it out. The reincarnated Clovis has lived in Germany, as we heard it. Is it not possible that the empire of Charlemagne may again evolve?

We read in the QUARTERLY about the empire of Christ; a series of articles from Mr. Griscom on Alsace-Lorraine declares in several places that Germany never was christianized. We have perhaps caught a glimpse into the truth of this very serious judgment, and would make all efforts for the realization that the King and Master of Germany in the future may be our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We say our best thanks for all help given us in all the years.

Sincerely yours,

O. IHRKE.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

Miss Perkins: I shall be thinking of all of you when the Convention is on. It is your great privilege to be so near. I shall think of you all.

With good will and best wishes to all,

Yours fraternally,

F. W. BRINKER,
[*Secretary, Indianapolis Branch.*]

TRIESTE, ITALY.

To The Theosophical Society Assembled in Annual Convention: Again a year is over since last Convention and again you can praise the Lord who gave you opportunity to meet in that spiritual centre and get your Light. We can only follow from afar with our thoughts and with the desire that a reflection of the Divine Ray which illumines you, may join us in these dark days and help us to follow courageously the Old Path.

Fraternally yours,

THERESE AND ALBERTO PLISNIER.

He who has no vision of eternity will never get a true hold of time.—CARLYLE.

REVIEWS

The Scale of Perfection, by Walter Hilton, newly edited with an Introduction by Evelyn Underhill; published by John M. Watkins, London; price 7*s.* 6*d.*

Some Minor Works of Richard Rolle, with The Privity of the Passion by S. Bonaventura, translated and edited by Geraldine E. Hodgson; published by John M. Watkins, London; price 5*s.*

Books published by John M. Watkins, carry their recommendation with them. It is to him we owe such books as *The Path of the Eternal Wisdom*, by John Cordelier, and *The Cloud of Unknowing* with an Introduction by Evelyn Underhill.

The works of Hilton and of Rolle are too well known to most of our readers to need extensive review. They are full of practical wisdom. How could it be otherwise, seeing that Hilton and Rolle were among the greatest of English mystics. The prayer of both of them was that of Crashaw to Saint Teresa:

> "O thou undaunted daughter of desires!
> By all thy dower of lights and fires,
> By all the eagle in thee, all the dove,
> By all thy lives and deaths of love,
> By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
> And by thy thirsts of love more large than they;
> By all thy brim-fill'd bowls of fierce desire;
> By thy last morning's draught of liquid fire;
> . . . . .
> Leave nothing of myself in me!"

Living with that sole end in view, they did the works of the Master whom they served,—from which follows *mukti*, whether in the East or in the West. For *Bhakti Yoga* was their path, and, as the *Nârada Sûtra* says,—"Love cannot be made to fulfil desires, for its nature is renunciation," yet, he who obtains Love, "becomes perfect, becomes immortal . . . intoxicated with joy, rejoicing in the Self. . . . Having obtained Love, he sees that alone, hears that alone, speaks that alone, and thinks that alone. . . . Love is its own reward" (Translated by E. T. Sturdy and published by John M. Watkins).

It is divinely simple: and yet, it is necessary to do the works of Love; not the works of self-love. The works of self-love—physical, mental, and imaginative—positively must be abandoned, must be seen as wholly evil, in little and in big—as Hilton and Rolle, in their different ways, make clear.

E. T. H.

The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, from the Mahatmas M. and K. H., transcribed, compiled, and with an Introduction by A. T. Barker; published by T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., London, and by Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York, 1924; price $7.50.

These letters should not have been published. They were not written for publication, and in one of them the writer states explicitly that neither he nor his "Brother" would allow their

publication at any time. Both morally and legally, letters are the property of their authors, not of the recipients, and it is dishonourable in the extreme to override this basic principle of conduct. The compiler pleads in his Introduction that their publication to-day may be excused because of "the present *impasse* in the affairs" of the Adyar Society. In plain language this means that he wants to open the eyes of those who believe in the infallibility of Mrs. Besant and of Mr. Leadbeater; which is no excuse. People who are capable of such a belief are better off with their eyes closed in any case. The compiler's error, probably well meant, is part of the Karma of Mrs. Besant's publication, years ago, of documents she had pledged herself to keep secret.

The letters themselves, written between 1880 and 1884, are a weird but fascinating jumble. Many of those attributed to Master M. and signed with his initial, were not from him, but were the work of one of his chelas, himself a high adept, authorized, of course, to use the great Master's name. This was part of the plan of campaign,—the protection of Madame Blavatsky, the woman. Colonel Olcott never understood this, although his *Old Diary Leaves* prove that he might have understood it if he had wished, and that he was given every opportunity to do so. He was too preoccupied trying to prove himself the equal of Madame Blavatsky, his "chum" and "co-founder,"—a pitiable exhibition, after the tireless enthusiasm he put into his work as "showman" in the very early days. The trouble was that he came to look upon himself as Exhibit A.

Mrs. Besant also has failed to understand the authorship of these letters, for reasons which ought to be obvious. In her collection—*Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*—she accepts all the letters signed "M." as from Master M., declaring in a note that she has been unable "to find the least trace, in the Letters of the Master M., of the personal idiosyncrasies of thought of either H. P. B. or H. S. O." Colonel Olcott, however, in spite of himself, left clues for those who care to follow them. Thus, in his *Old Diary Leaves*, First Series, in a footnote on page 256, he says: "A very curious fact . . . that the 'Mahatma M.'s' handwriting, which was so carefully scrutinised by the S. P. R., their experts and agents, and said to resemble that of H. P. B., was a coarse, rough script, something like a collection of chopped roots and brush-wood, while the handwriting of the same personage [?] in the *Isis* MS. and in the notes he wrote me was totally different. It was a small, fine script, such as a lady might have written, and while generally resembling H. P. B.'s own handwriting, yet differing from it so as to present an appearance of distinct individuality, which enabled me to recognize it as that personage's MS. whenever I saw it. I do not pretend to account for this fact, I only state it as something which must be recorded."

The question mark in square brackets in the foregoing extract, was inserted by the present reviewer.

In the same volume of *Old Diary Leaves*, page 293, Colonel Olcott writes: "One quite long letter that I received [from a member of the Lodge] in 1879, while in Rajputana, most strangely alters her [Madame Blavatsky's] sex, speaks of her in the male gender, and *confounds her with Mahatma M.*—known as our Guru. It says—about a first draft of the letter itself which had been written but not sent me: 'Owing to certain expressions therein, the letter was stopped on its way by order of our Brother H. P. B. As you are not under my direct guidance but his (hers), we have naught to say, either of us; etc.'"

Master M. and "our Brother H. P. B." (*not* Madame Blavatsky) were and are as different in their idiosyncrasies of thought, manner and expression, as two members of the Lodge can be, while "our Brother H. P. B." and Madame Blavatsky, though totally different persons, were very much alike in some ways.

Apart from that question, however, many of these letters, both those signed "K. H." and those signed "M.", were written by chelas on the slim basis of "Tell him he's an idiot, and prove it"! The fortunate chela would then have to discover as best he could what his Master really wanted him to write, the result occasionally being a letter which now fills ten or more pages of solid type. Further, some of these letters were dictated interiorly to chelas who did not know a word of English. Words and whole sentences were omitted, and the punctuation is positively wild. Here, for instance, is an opportunity for an especially lively intuition. What

does it mean? What was in its author's mind? *How* was this extraordinary nonsense produced? It is the opening sentence of a letter signed "M." (Letter No. XCVII): "Common people, are the masses as different from those who are distinguished." The confusion is all the more tantalizing because the words, re-arranged, have the makings of a very healthy dogma!

One gratifying result of the jumble will be that even the most superstitious, even the laziest—those who will not think for themselves—could not turn these letters into a new infallibility. Of all things, the Masters would deplore that most, and that, in any case, they will be spared.

On the other hand these letters are simply invaluable. Genuine? Of course they are genuine! The great heart of the Lodge beats through all of them. They contain instruction for which every student should be grateful. We have marked innumerable passages. In the "Screen of Time" some of these will be discussed in later issues of the QUARTERLY. Nothing new, nothing startling, but—the bread of life. Here is one, from the section headed "Probation, and Chelaship": "Fasting, meditation, chastity of thought, word, and deed; silence for certain periods of time to enable nature herself to speak to him who comes to her for information; government of the animal passions and impulses; utter unselfishness of intention. . . . Such is in fact part of his course of discipline, and his Guru or initiator can but assist him with his experience and will-power but can do no more *until the last and supreme initiation.* I am also of opinion that few candidates imagine the degree of inconvenience—nay, suffering and harm to himself—the said initiator submits to for the sake of his pupil. The peculiar physical, moral, and intellectual conditions of neophytes and adepts alike, vary much, as anyone will easily understand; thus, in each case, the instructor has to adapt his conditions to those of the pupil, and the strain is terrible, for, to achieve success, we have to bring ourselves into a *full* rapport with the subject under training. And as the greater the powers of the adept, the less he is in sympathy with the natures of the profane who often come to him saturated with the emanations of the outside world—those animal emanations of the selfish, brutal crowd that we so dread—the longer he was separated from that world and the purer he has become,—the more difficult the self-imposed task."

One more, also signed "K. H." (from Letter No. LXII): "My poor, blind friend—you are entirely unfit for practical occultism! . . . You were told, however, that the path to Occult Sciences has to be trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; that every new step in it leading to the final goal, is surrounded by pit-falls and cruel thorns; that the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and *conquer* the thousand and one furies who keep watch over its adamantine gates and entrance—furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy, and finally Temptation—especially the latter; and that he who would see beyond, had to first destroy this living wall; that he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never failing determination, and yet be meek and gentle, humble, and have shut out from his heart every human passion that leads to evil. Are you all this? Have you ever begun a course of training which would lead to it?"

Finally, while we have always revered Madame Blavatsky, the reading of these letters has renewed in us and, if possible, has increased, the realization of her heroism, of her selfless devotion, of her unconquerable zeal. What she endured at the hands of Olcott, Sinnett, Hume and others, we can only dimly imagine; and yet this must have been as nothing in comparison with the attacks of those who were *consciously* arrayed against her Master and her Cause. Whatever her defects—and it is impossible to sympathize with *all* the works of a tornado—she was superb. That so many despised and condemned her was due in large measure to the fact that she was too honest, too humble, and too big, for the world in which she lived.

T.

Books reviewed in these columns may be obtained from The Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O., New York, N. Y.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 293.—*We are told that after death the principles are separated, the lower wearing away their earth attachment in Kama Loka, after which the higher go for their rest and reward to Devachan. Does not the Law demand that the person remain in Kama Loka until the earth bonds are worn away? If so, can our prayers help him?*

ANSWER.—Very little has been given out about the states of consciousness after death (of course "Kama Loka" and "Devachan" are states of consciousness and not places). We do, however, know certain facts and can perhaps gain light by analogy. Real prayer is a force. When accompanied by sacrifice—the "wings of prayer"—it is one of the most potent of forces. We are all familiar with the way in which we are affected by the atmosphere we may be in. When the level around us is low, we tend to sink to that level ourselves; when we are with the high and spiritually minded, it is far easier for us to be our best selves, to be free from the bonds of our lower natures. It is not hard to believe that heart-felt prayers for those who have gone on, may surround them in the same way and help to dissolve, as it were, the bonds that bind their consciousness to earthly things. We may be sure of one thing. Selfless prayer with sacrifice is a contribution to the spiritual capital of the Lodge. When done "with intention" to help a given person, it will be used to help him. The Masters are faithful trustees.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—The personal consciousness presumably remains attached to some condition of Kama Loka, so long as it cherishes any gross image of earth life. But, perhaps, the soul may become conscious of the lower reaches of Devachan, before it has gained complete emancipation from Kama Loka. Conditions of time and space must differ for the after-death states from the conditions with which we are most familiar here, and yet even now we may be conscious of both hell and heaven simultaneously. Prayer must be equally effective in life and in death. It is not necessary for a man to have a body, in order that our prayers for him may be effective. The real man is not his body.

S. L.

QUESTION NO. 294.—*Every man realizes that he is centred in himself and wants his own way; how can he get the centre out of self?*

ANSWER.—We have been told to strive to lift the centre of consciousness; if we can transfer it to the Higher Self we shall no longer "want our own way" in the lower sense. We can discipline ourselves by remembering that the self-centred individual is a bore and a nuisance,—this may not be a high beginning but at least it will be in the direction of charity to others. We can also remind ourselves that the self is a very mean and contemptible object, and a most unhealthy resting place for the man who would grow spiritually. We can take Madame Blavatsky's advice and make a bundle of the lower four, pinning it to the higher three; but that is only repeating what we said at the beginning.

S.

ANSWER.—To "realize that he is centred in himself and wants his own way," is in itself quite an achievement and represents a long step forward. The next step is to realize that he is not "centred in himself" at all, and has not the slightest idea of what his true way is, the lower

nature where he has been centred and the self-will he has mistaken for his desire being rank usurpers and at the farthest remove from his real self and his true desires. With the realization of this begins the battle for "right self-identification."

As the question says, most of us, whether we have attained the point of realizing it or not, have spent our lives brooding on ourselves and the desires of our lower natures which we call "our" desires. Desires grow by brooding on themselves. To conquer self-centredness, we must change the centre of our brooding, of our "meditation," conscious or unconscious. There are many practices that help to loosen the grip of self. For instance:

Never use your imagination to serve your vanity, imagining conversations, situations, etc., in which you appear to advantage.

Never permit the least self-pity. Insist on feeling gratitude instead—gratitude that you are not in a Russian prison, if you can think of nothing better!

Never complain inwardly or outwardly of anything or anybody.

These are only samples. Spiritual books are full of helpful suggestions, but, helpful as they are, we shall not get far with the effort to rid ourselves of the false desires of our lower selves until we supplant them with the infinitely more potent and true desires of the soul, the love of the Master at the head of the ray on which the soul stands, and the desire to serve him. Good desires, as well as bad, grow by brooding on themselves.

J. F. B. M.

QUESTION NO. 295.—*Does a belief in Reincarnation and Karma tend to lessen the idea of family responsibility?*

ANSWER.—A belief in Karma certainly lessens the tendency to hold one's family and heredity responsible for one's own shortcomings, and helps us to put the blame where it belongs, on ourselves. Karma teaches that we reap the fruit of what we do, or omit to do, good or bad, in this life or another. Such a belief can hardly fail to increase one's sense of responsibility toward all of one's duties, family or otherwise. Sooner or later all duties must be performed, all tangled relations straightened out, just as, to use a simple illustration, all pieces in a picture-puzzle must be fitted into place to complete the picture. We are not born into our particular families by accident. Some of our family duties may come to us from past lives, opportunities to make reparation for wrongs done, or some return for benefits received. From wherever they come they are always opportunities, and our path forward lies always through the performance of our duties, never around or away from them.

It has been said, moreover, that each member of a family has a peculiar opportunity to help all of the others. Each family has its Karma, its weaknesses and "sins" of various sorts. The conquest of such a tendency within himself by any one member, weakens the grip of that fault on all, and makes the battle easier for every member of the family that has suffered from it. Obviously this fact greatly increases the responsibility of each one toward all the others.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Karma is, in one meaning, the universal law of adjustment, whereby all things are held in line with the divine plan of evolution. Reincarnation is one of the manifestations of Karma. How, then, can a belief in these possibly lessen one's sense of any responsibility? Whenever we shirk a responsibility, we create a situation which needs adjustment, for it is, in a very real way, a situation contrary to Nature. Ethical laws are as inexorable as the laws of physics. Family duties are a responsibility imposed upon us by the Good Law. Why should we except them from the general principle, that we cannot act against the Law with impunity at any point?

S. L.

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